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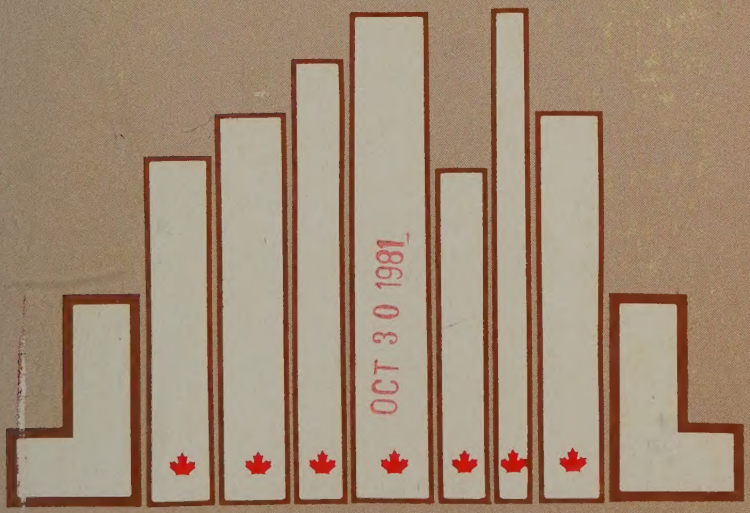
Children's Choices of CANADIAN BOOKS



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Volume 2

CHILDREN'S CHOICES OF CANADIAN BOOKS

Volume 2

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Children's Choices of CANADIAN BOOKS

Volume 2

Edited by
MARGARET CAUGHEY

A practical guide to Canadian children's books prepared by parents and children for the benefit of all who want to know more about what is worthwhile and appealing to Canadian children.

The books were read by children of the National Capital area and their reports were collated by the Citizens' Committee on Children, Ottawa.

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Preface

What began four years ago as a simple attempt by a handful of parents to inform themselves about Canadian children's books has expanded into a large and complex project involving tens of adults and hundreds of children. About a thousand children have enrolled with the Citizens' Committee on Children to review books for recreational reading, and approximately two hundred others have participated through classroom activity. At any time during the past year there were as many as 450 active reviewers, and over the last three years 400 books have been reviewed. The organization and realization of this undertaking has been achieved through the participation of some sixty adults who, like the children, gave freely of their time (and often of materials) to promote the cause of Canadian children's books.

But while the numbers are impressive and the results clearly visible in the book reviews published in two volumes of *Children's Choices of Canadian Books*, the ramifications of the project are more intangible. We hope it has influenced the accessibility of good Canadian children's books; we know it has affected the children who did the reviews. Indeed it has been the process of reviewing itself that has attracted most of the children and their parents to the project. Most parents feel that encouraging children to think critically about what they read is good in itself, and those who have had the hope that reviewing books would change their child's attitude toward reading have often had that hope realized. Frequently a less keen reader has been persuaded to read not as a student for marks or for a school assignment, but rather as a critic offering a free and honest opinion, and in so doing has been surprised to learn, "I like to read more than I thought I did".

All of the children who have been involved have grown, to a greater or lesser extent, in their capacity *to articulate their ideas*: "the pictures showed what the words were saying" and "the story was well written in order ... the expressions are very good ... I was happy when I read the book" from two seven-year-olds; *to be discriminating*: "I just realized I don't like some humourous books" from a twelve-year-old, and "the style of writing was strange with repeated words ... it took much too long to find out what happened" from a nine-year-old; *to be open-minded*: from a thirteen-year-old, "I am not that interested in horses, horse stories, or anything about them. I didn't think I would like this book because it was about horses but I really enjoyed it", and from a ten-year-old boy who most emphatically does not like Indian stories "but this (Indian story) was the best book ever written"; *to perceive themselves in their world*: "maybe I'm not the only one in the world with what seems like 'an impossible mother'"; and even sometimes *to assert themselves*: under "Parent's Comments" but in the nine-year-old's handwriting "Don't send B... any more books".

Inevitably the perspective of the adults has also been affected. We have had our untested ideas of what *should be* tempered by the evidence of what *is*, and have grown to respect the reasons children have for their opinions. And while we have sometimes observed with silent sympathy children's sincere efforts to be fair about books they disliked, we also have enjoyed with them the pleasure of a "good read". We too have been rewarded by the activity itself and by the friendships made. It has been a happy collaboration between adults and between adults and children, one which we would commend to others.

Margaret Caughey
Nepean, Ontario
May, 1981

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank those who have made special contributions to our project and to the preparation of this volume, the innumerable friends, relatives, and acquaintances who gave help when help was needed. Particularly we are indebted to:

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– Mitel Corporation for assistance in the preparation of the manuscript;

– the parents who consistently supported and encouraged us.

Most especially we thank the children who read so many books, some of which they did not really enjoy, in order to find the ones they really did. Their names appear at the back of this book.

CHILDREN'S CHOICES OF CANADIAN BOOKS

Explanatory Notes

What books are reviewed

This collection of child-based book reviews represents the output, during the eighteen months since the publication of *Children's Choices of Canadian Books, Volume 1*, of the Citizens' Committee on Children's book reviewing activity. In general the objectives and the procedures followed in the preparation of this second volume are wholly consistent with those used in the preparation of the first. As before, all books are "of, by, or about" Canada or Canadians, or are published here, but unlike *Volume 1*, no limitations were placed on the range of subject matter. *Children's Choices of Canadian Books, Volume 1* specifically excluded legends, non-fiction, and books without a significant "Canadian content" as it is defined below. *Volume 2* includes all of these, as well as books of other types. Some of the books intended for inclusion in *Volume 1* but for which the reviews were not completed soon enough to appear there are included in *Volume 2*. The bulk of the reviews are of books published between 1975 and 1979. Having decided to concentrate our efforts on books from those years, the only other limitations were practical ones: we reviewed books that were available to us in sufficient number and in sufficient time to complete them, giving due consideration to our resources and our publication schedule. Those deserving of review but which could not be done for this collection will be reviewed for subsequent volumes.

In choosing books for review we relied heavily but not exclusively on professional recommendation, particularly for the older books. For newer books, many of which had not yet been professionally reviewed, we also used our own judgement.

The child reviewers

The children who read and reviewed the books were volunteers. They came to us after having heard of the project through newspaper or newsletter articles, or by way of friends who were already involved. No attempt was made to establish or infer a social, academic, or demographic profile; we accepted all children who wanted to be part of the project and they were free to drop out temporarily or permanently as they chose. It can be inferred that as willing participants they either already enjoyed reading or were receiving a certain amount of encouragement from home. While most were competent readers and said they liked to read, they tended not to be extremely precocious – such children found the fare too tame. In the main they ranged in age from four to fourteen, with a few younger children and some as old as sixteen. Generally, they were a diverse group of children from across the National Capital area who had as their common bond an inclination to read and review books. Those who reviewed three or more books are named at the back of this volume. These 430 children have reviewed an average of ten books each.

The review process

Books were reviewed by having a large number of children of the appropriate ages and of both sexes read a book and report on it, and then having an adult summarize their reactions in the form of a brief composite review. Starting with a likely age range for a book, we assigned it to specific children for review. This assignment was "random" in that we did not pre-suppose

anything about how a child would like a book. The children themselves did not choose what they would read, nor were their individual tastes catered to. In the months a child was enrolled as a reviewer, he or she was given a variety of types and levels of books and usually was not assigned different books by the same author. Normally the children had three to four weeks to complete their reviews, which they did on form reports (see Appendix).

When a sufficient number of readers had reviewed a book, a member of the editorial committee collated their responses and did an objective analysis of them. She then wrote a full and detailed report and presented it for discussion to the editorial committee, which ensured that the children's opinions were the focus of the report. However, we were aware of our right and even responsibility to make independent adult observations, and while the children's reactions always constitute the bodies of these detailed reports, adults views are sometimes appended. The reviews here published are therefore composite reviews containing the salient points arising from the adult collation and summary of the children's reactions. Copies of the detailed reports are sent to the publishers concerned and are available to others for a modest price.

How the reviews are presented

Each of the 197 reviews consists of a brief outline of what the story is about; a discussion of what children liked or didn't like about it, and why; a mention of any aspects of the book that might interest or enlighten children, parents, or teachers; and an indication of the age range and sort of child the book seems most appealing to. The type of literature and the setting in time and place are listed, and special features of the book such as Canadian content, readability, and portability are shown by symbols. The reviews are grouped according to how well the books were liked. Each book is fully identified by author, illustrator, title, publisher, date of publication, number of pages, and if in print, the price for cloth or paperback editions. The features that are highlighted in the reviews are described more fully below.

Popularity Groups The review process summarized in the preceding section indicated the most appropriate age range for each book (see also *Age Range*, below). The ratings of the children within that range placed a book into one of six broad popularity groupings. A description of what each group encompasses precedes the listing of the reviews of the book within it. Group I books are most generally popular, and books in Group VI are not generally liked at all. The reviews within each group are in alphabetical order.

Availability and Price The prices quoted for in-print titles were confirmed with the publishers in all but a couple of cases in March, 1981. Out-of-print titles are also included; where they have recently gone out of print they may still be available in bookstores, or they may be widely available in libraries. It is hoped that publishers will re-issue some of the better out-of-print titles.

Type of Story The type of story is listed, as well as the main topic or topics covered. When a situation or topic is treated in a story in a lesser way it is usually not referred to in the heading, but is referred to in the subject index. The brief description of the plot which introduces each review can also direct readers to books that interest them.

Setting and Time These are listed in the headings but are not included in the Subject Index. It may well be that some books with a strong local flavour will appeal more to children who know the area or are particularly interested in it

than they did to our readers in the Ottawa area, and would be a good choice for children living or visiting there. Similarly, specific time settings may have special interest for some readers or teachers.

Age Range The age range suggested for any book is that for which we found the reception optimum. Children in that range liked the book much better than those outside it, and both they and we felt it was best suited to their age. Readers who are more proficient than average, or less, can of course choose books above or below their range or "easy reading" books (see below). Where the majority of either boys or girls showed strong preference for a story, it is suggested as better for one sex, but this was done only when the preferences were very marked.

Explanation of the marginal symbols

🍁 🍁 🍁 *Canadian Content* Many of the books in this *Volume 2* and all of those in *Volume 1* were felt to have significance in imparting a sense of Canadianism to the reader. A measure of that significance is indicated by the three sizes of the maple leaf symbol. Such designation is necessarily subjective, probably more so that any other made in the evaluations, and is the only subjective evaluation made entirely by adults. The size of the symbol is intended to indicate to what degree a book is successful in evoking a sense of time or place; in conveying an appreciation or understanding of national diversity and cultural differences; in stimulating a sense of national pride in our past, our present, and our future; or in establishing a Canadian identity through the use of mood, flavour, vernacular, environment, or events. Where such content is considered mimimal or is absent, the symbol is omitted.

★ *Easy Reading* These are books which, to quote a parent, "are not a chore to read". They are not too long, not too difficult, yet have a strong mature story line that will hold the interest of children at the top of or a year or two beyond the recommended age range. They are all books that were found to be well liked by the readers and are usually in Group I, II or III and are suggested as good choices to entertain and stimulate children who are less inclined to read.

▲ *Portable* Some books lend themselves to travelling. They are short, high-interest books, easily carried, inexpensive – just the sort to take along on a car trip or camping or to give a child who is sick. Typically they are found in Groups I through III, are paperbacks that will fit in purse or travel kit, cost $5.00 or less, and are in print.

● *Adult Favourite* During the course of this project we have met long and often to discuss children's books. We have read what critics say about them, we have analyzed what the children think about them, and among us we, like the children, have read them all. To those which stand out in our own minds because they were a pleasure to read, and without regard for the critics' or the children's verdicts, we have given our purely personal seal of approval.

Quotes from the children's reports

It is the children who have rated these books. They have done so without fear or favour, often expressing themselves with an aptness that extends beyond the particular book they were talking about. Some of their lucid commentary is repeated here to illustrate their views on books and reading in general. The quotes are interspersed among the reviews – please note that they are not adjacent to the book which happened to provoke them.

The scope of the indexes

Cumulative indexes refer to the contents of both *Volume 1* and *Volume 2* of *Children's Choices of Canadian Books*. The Author and Title Indexes are straight forward merged alphabetical listings. The Subject Index, which did not appear in *Volume 1*, is also cumulative, and encompasses story types, topics, situations, and values, as well as more conventional library-style headings. Many of the references are to minor but still significant aspects of a book, and most books are referred to several times.

Implications

Does it matter what children think they like?

In the final analysis, individual preferences will prevail. Some children with unlimited appetite and tolerance apparently enjoy almost anything. Others, whose taste is more defined, may find real pleasure in a book most other children just don't like. Most children fall somewhere in between, and seem to appreciate some assurance that they are going to like what they are going to read.

That children's tastes are not always in accord with adult good judgement may sometimes be distressing, and the low placement in the popularity scale of a book highly regarded by adults suggests that parents and teachers will have to expend considerable effort to make it aceptable to most children. For some adults this reinforces the view that adult intervention in children's reading is essential. It may also suggest that in making judgements, adults are inclined to use criteria largely irrelevant to the enjoyment children will derive from reading on their own and for recreation.

Where concern for relevance is present or where children would appreciate the opinion of their peers, the reviews in *Children's Choices of Canadian Books* provides a unique expression of their point of view.

* * * * * * *

> *"Above all else, a children's book should simply interest children: the readers for whom it is intended will care not a whit about any other consideration." Sheila Egoff, The Republic of Childhood, Oxford, 1975, p. 9.*

GROUP I

These are the books that were almost universally acceptable to the readers. Generally about 90% of those in the age ranges indicated rated the books highly and were especially enthusiastic in what they said about them. While not always the most substantial books to read, they were the most popular.

The quotes from children that are interspersed among the reviews illustrate some of the trends in children's opinions. Please note that they do not refer specifically to the books listed on the same page.

For an explanation of the marginal symbols and of the evaluation process, see the Explanatory Notes (pp. 1-4).

Cowan, Janice **The Mystery of Castle Hotel**

9-12 illus. Wendy Irvine

▲ Borealis, 1978 85 pages. $5.95 paper

★ *Type of Story*: Mystery
Setting: Urban, Toronto, Ontario
Time: Present

Three Nova Scotia children and their Australian cousin are to spend the summer holidays in Toronto with an aunt and uncle who run a hotel in an old castle. On arrival, they find their relatives are nowhere to be seen, and strange things are going on.

The initial reaction to this book was that it has an unappealing cover, and few readers would have chosen the book themselves. However, they found it an exciting, suspenseful, easy-to-read story, one that was greatly enjoyed by all except those who definitely don't like mysteries. The Toronto setting is not well described, nor is the story profound or particularly well written.

For mystery and adventure story lovers aged 9 to 12, or older.

Gould, Dulce **Mac and the Radish Robber**

3-6
▲
illus. by the author
Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976 32 pages. $2.70 paper

★ *Type of Story*: Animal Fantasy
Setting: Prairie garden
Time: Any time

Something is after Mac the rat's radishes. By enlisting the aid of Tim the dog, and Pinky his rabbit friend, Mac manages to catch the thief who then helps Mac store his radish crop for the winter.

This lengthy little mystery was a real hit when read aloud to children six and under; even the youngest were enthralled by it. They also enjoyed the detailed illustration on every page. It was intended, however, as a beginning reader for grades 2 and 3, and some children of that age did enjoy it. They considered it easy to read but they liked the illustrations less that the younger children, and a story of cute animals being helping-friends does not have strong appeal for that age group.

A read-along mystery story for children aged 3 to 6, or for 7 to 9 year olds who can enjoy an easy-to-read animal fantasy. For this older range the book would fall into Group IV.

* * * * * * *

"The writer did nice words." Reader #768, 6 year old boy.

* * * * * * *

"The story captured my imagination and I imagined some wonderful stories." Reader #339, 11 year old girl.

* * * * * * *

Hughes, Monica **The Tomorrow City**

10-14+
Hamish Hamilton, 1978 137 pages. $12.95 cloth

★
●
Type of Story: Science Fiction
Setting: A modern city
Time: Present

A computer, C-3, has a whole city under its control, deciding on its own what is best for the inhabitants. Caro and her friend David are concerned about what is happening and set about freeing the people from C-3.

Nearly everyone thought this would be a good book, and they found it was. They were expansive in their praise of it: it received one of the most enthusiastic set of reviews of all the books we have surveyed. It was felt to be a different sort of story, one that made readers think, and was well written and compelling. Readers over an exceptionally wide age range enjoyed it very much. It was easy enough for most ten-year-olds and still held the interest of those fourteen and fifteen.

A hit with both boys and girls age 10 to 14 and older.

Korman, Gordon **This CAN'T be Happening at Macdonald Hall!**

9-13

illus. Affie Mohammed
Scholastic-TAB, 1978 124 pages. $1.75 paper

Type of Story: Adventure/Humour
Setting: Small town, Ontario
Time: Present

When the Headmaster of a boarding school separates roommates Bruno and Boots, they make life almost unbearable for their new roomies and the entire school.

This was considered a very funny book, and was well enjoyed by both boys and girls. They found it very realistic and identified with the characters. The readers were most enthusiastic about the cover and liked the overall format. The heroes' high jinks may seem outrageous but are never malicious, and in the end all of the somewhat shallowly drawn characters have some redeeming features. Our readers were especially impressed that it was written by a thirteen-year-old boy.

This hilarious book is highly enjoyed by boys and girls 9 to 13 or older.

Leach, John and Rankin, Jean **The Gift of Winter**

6-8

illus. by the authors
Prentice-Hall, 1977 unpaged. $6.95 cloth

Type of Story: Fantasy
Setting: City and forest
Time: Long ago

All the characters of a town decided to complain to the Ministry of Winter that this season is too cold and dreary. After many adventures Winter delights them with a surprise which helps make winter wonderful.

Children were delighted with the brilliantly coloured characters and enjoyed their imaginary adventures, perhaps because they remembered them from the TV Cartoon Special. Too, a celebration of how snow makes winter beautiful and enjoyable seemed to appeal to Ottawa children. It is easy to read for the older children.

A read-aloud for children 6 to 8, or for many to read for themselves.

* * * * * * *

"I think the story was made for enjoying." Reader #572, 7 year old boy.

* * * * * * *

"I thought the book was splendid – a colourful and imaginative story of true events. My son didn't share my enthusiasm." Parent of #201, 10 year old boy.

Lunn, Janet **The Twelve Dancing Princesses**

7-11
girls
●

illus. Laszlo Gal
Methuen, 1979 unpaged. $10.95 cloth

Type of Story: Fairy Tale
Setting: European kingdom
Time: Long ago

This is a retelling of the old French fairy tale about twelve princesses who are under a spell which compels them to go dancing. A poor farm boy manages to break the evil spell and win the hand of the youngest. It is magnificently illustrated.

Girls acclaimed the book most enthusiastically. So did parents. Boys who did not feel a story both about girls and dancing beneath their dignity also enjoyed it. Everyone liked the illustrations. The older children found it easy to read. Although non-readers did not review the book for us, the youngest children's reactions and the clear simple text suggest it could be very successful as a read-along for children of five or six.

Well liked by girls (and some boys) aged 7 to 11.

* * * * * * * *

"I think whoever wrote it has great talent." Reader #679, 11 year old girl.

* * * * * * * *

McKim, Audrey and McKim, Dodie **Alpha-Diddle Riddles**

6-7
★
▲

illus. by the author
Scholastic-TAB, 1978 unpaged. $1.25 paper

Type of Book: Humour

Alpha-Diddle Riddles is a small A to Z of riddles – one for each letter of the alphabet. Each riddle is presented on one page and answered on the back.

e.g. Q. Why is B like fire?
A. Because it makes *oil boil!*
or Q. Which letter appears twice on your face?
A. The letter I.

This slim, modestly instructive book was enjoyed very much by beginning readers who gained a sense of achievement from their understanding of the simple riddles. The cover was not generally liked, and the illustrations seemed childish to older children who still enjoyed the jokes.

For 6 and 7 year olds, and for 8 year olds who are not offended by the very young illustrations.

* * * * * * * *

Q. Can you imagine the events happening? A. "No, because it's a silly story – but that's OK." Reader #756, 7 year old boy.

Moore, Marlene **The Christmas Snowmobile**

5-9
★
▲

illus. John Myćka
Highway, 1977 28 pages. $2.00 paper

Type of Story: Fantasy/Poetry
Setting: Santa Claus' home, North Pole
Time: Present

This story in verse tells how Santa's reindeer catch 'flu just before Christmas. His clever elves save the day by converting his old sled to a snowmobile so that he can deliver his gifts on time.

This is a book for reading aloud, one that was popular with both adults and children. They found it a funny, easy, nice story about a happy time of year, in pleasing verse and illustrated well by the black and white drawings.

Great for reading aloud to ages 5 to 9; 8 and 9 year olds could read it themselves.

* * * * * * *

"I like books with pictures on every page." Reader #923, 5 year old girl.

* * * * * * *

Can't imagine the events really happening "because there aren't kingdoms like that any more, with no rich kings – only the mayor is rich. There are no kings only queens." Reader #659, 5 year old boy.

* * * * * * *

Munsch, Robert N. **Mud Puddle**

3-7
●

illus. Sami Suomalainen
Annick, 1979 29 pages. $6.95 cloth

Type of Story: Growing Up/Picture Book
Setting: A child's home and yard
Time: Present

Every time Jule Ann goes outside, a mud puddle jumps on her and gets her dirty. After several bouts with the mud puddle, and the bathtub, she takes things in her own hands and banishes the mud puddle forever.

Children found this a funny book. They enjoyed the idea that the mud puddle jumped on the child, and they liked the illustration very much. While some of the older children could read it themselves, it is particularly successful as a read-aloud book.

Understandable and amusing for children age 3 to 7.

* * * * * * *

"I can imagine *it in my head, but it wouldn't really* really *happen." Reader #572, 7 year old boy.*

Piper, Eileen **The Magician's Trap**

7-10
★
▲

illus. Alan Daniel
Scholastic-TAB, 1976 60 pages. $2.25 paper

Type of Story: Fairy Tale
Setting: Near and in the sea
Time: Long ago

The wicked magician Duke Rollo has cast an evil spell on Prince Harold the Daring. Can the little blind girl Elsa succeed, where so many others have failed, in restoring the son to his grieving father, the King?

Both boys and girls judged this a highly successful story, scary yet easy to read, and so exciting and full of suspense to the end that it was hard to put down. The water colour illustrations were unusually impressive and even though they were almost too scary for the youngest readers, everyone thought they were well drawn and went well with the story. The format gives the impression it is for children slightly younger than the nine and ten-year-olds who did enjoy it.

A highly successful fairy tale for readers 7 to 10 years old.

Reese, Willard **The Money Tree**

4-6
★

illus. Phil Switzer
LeBel, 1977 unpaged. $6.95 cloth

Type of Story: Picture Book
Setting: Rural
Time: Present

A treasure map leads two boys to an old man's backyard and a "money tree" under which they regularly find pennies. The boys make friends with the old man and his last months are made happier by their visits. The last two pages show one of the boys, now old, awaiting the visit of children to his "nickel tree".

The book was a success with children who were attracted by the oversize format, the colourful simple illustrations, the large bold print, and the idea of the money tree. It was enjoyed by the children both as a read-along and as a beginning reader. Unfortunately, almost none saw nor understood the underlying theme of the loneliness of an old man and his desire for youthful company. Some parents objected to the idea that the old should be befriended for financial gain, and found the "verse" style awkward to read. The children were happily unaware of these reservations.

For children 4 to 6.

* * * * * * *

"It wasn't a super fantastic book but it wasn't fair or poor, and it taught me about what happened through the eyes of a victim." Reader #8, 13 year old boy.

Richler, Mordecai **Jacob Two-Two Meets the Hooded Fang**

6-12
▲
illus. Fritz Wegner
Bantam, 1977 (c.1975) 87 pages. $1.95 paper

●
Type of Story: Fantasy/Adventure
Setting: Urban, Children's Prison and Kingston Hill, England
Time: Present

Having unwittingly insulted an adult, six-year-old Jacob finds himself incarcerated in the children's prison in the custody of the dreaded Hooded Fang.

This funny, imaginative fantasy has been read and re-read many times by our readers, at home or at school. It is unusual both in being enjoyed by such a wide age range, and in that its enjoyment is in no way diminished by having read it before or by having seen the movie. The numerous line drawings are fitting complement to the story. While certainly not a simple book, it is compelling and children said it was easy to read. However, only the very good or very familiar readers under eight or nine could read it themselves.

Highly enjoyed by the whole family, but especially by children 6 to 12.

Rowe, Erna **Giant Dinosaurs**

2-7
★
illus. Merle Smith
Scholastic-TAB, 1973 32 pages. $2.25 paper

●
Type of Story: Science Picture Book

This is an informative picture book on dinosaurs, their names, their sizes, and some of their habits, with colourful and humourous illustrations, brief text in bold print, and phonetic spellings of dinosaurs' names.

This is a most successful effort in presenting science to young children. The bright, humourous pictures and the simple text intrigued and instructed the children; it stimulated their curiosity without overwhelming them with facts. Parents were equally keen on it. Its only drawback is the fragile binding that will not survive the repeated handling the book is sure to have. While both boys and girls enjoyed it, it was especially popular with boys.

A science picture book for 2 to 7 year olds, and some even older who are interested in dinosaurs.

Seton, Ernest Thompson **King of the Grizzlies**

9-11
★
illus. Mort Künstler
Scholastic-TAB, 1970 95 pages. $1.50 paper

▲
Type of Story: Realistic Animal
Setting: Mountainous wilderness, Rocky Mountains, USA
Time: Early 1900's

A grizzly, orphaned as a cub, survives many hardships during his first year, and as time passes becomes the feared and respected lord of a large territory. The changing relationships between the bear and his surroundings and other animals is described.

Most readers found this an interesting, easily read story. The illustrations definitely enhanced the story for them, and they found the book well written.

For readers 9 to 11 or older who enjoy an easy, well-written nature story.

Siamon, Sharon **Strange Lake Adventure**

8-11 illus. David Simpson
★ Gage, 1979 128 pages. $2.40 paper

▲ *Type of Story*: Adventure/Prospecting
Setting: Small town and surrounding bush, Northern Ontario
Time: Present

The three Savela children, sixteen-year-old Marya, ten-year-old Eric, and eight-year-old Anna, go by snowmobile to deliver medicine to a solitary prospector in a nearby abandoned mine site. A hazardous ride through the bush, a heavy snowstorm, and a race to help the prospector stake claims lead to an exciting conclusion.

The action, suspense, mystery, humour, and ease of reading made this an enjoyable book for the readers. They also liked the interesting details on mining, minerals, and prospecting, and felt they'd learned a lot. The book successfully captures the flavour of a northern Canadian winter with some of the joys and hazards with which most, if not all, of the readers were familiar. The characters of the children are very believable.

Easy reading for children 8 to 11, or older.

Weir, Joan Sherman **Career Girl**

11-14 Tree Frog Press, 1979 141 pages. $3.95 paper $8.95 cloth
girls *Type of Story*: Growing Up/Ballet
★ *Setting*: Urban, Toronto, Ontario
▲ *Time*: 1970's

Patti Maxwell is one of several senior students, both boys and girls, at a residential ballet school who are auditioning for positions with a national ballet company. Through her relationships with her dancing partner, other classmates, and a physically handicapped young friend, she learns to strike a balance between perfection in performance and lasting human values.

This was an immediate favourite not only with girls already familiar with ballet, but also with those who had not realized the dedication and hard work that dancing demands. It was considered a realistically written and attractive looking book with its cover photo of a ballerina at the barre. If boys could read it in a brown paper wrapper they would probably also enjoy it, because the human emotions and moral values are universal.

For girls age 11 to 14, or even older, and some boys.

GROUP II

While not quite as universally popular as those in Group I, these books were still very acceptable; generally over 80% of the readers enjoyed them very much. Included are those books for which a somewhat muted enthusiasm prevented their inclusion in Group I. Also appearing are some of the most popular books for older children, whose diverging and maturing tastes and interests result in a more critical approach to reading. With rare exception historical fiction and legends make their first appearance here.

The quotes from children that are interspersed among the reviews illustrate some of the trends in children's opinions. Please note that they do not refer specifically to the books listed on the same page.

For an explanation of the marginal symbols and of the evaluation process, see the Explanatory Notes (pp. 1-4).

Abell, Kathleen **King Orville and the Bullfrogs**

6-8 ●

illus. Errol Le Cain
Little, Brown, 1974 48 pages. $7.75 cloth

Type of Story: Fairy Tale
Setting: Castle, far away
Time: Long ago

There is a lot of coming and going among the three lovely princesses, three handsome princes, two kings, two queens, and the inevitable three frogs before the inevitable fairy tale ending.

This "handsome" book with its gentle satire and fairly sophisticated language stretched the younger readers, but was much enjoyed by those old enough to follow it and not too grown up to still enjoy a fairy tale – especially a funny one that is so amusingly illustrated. The depiction of human foibles may either amuse or irritate the adult who reads it aloud, but because it is fairly long with no chapter breaks, it is most successful when the child can enjoy the pictures while the story is being read to him.

For children 6 to 8 or older who enjoy fairy tales.

5-7
▲

Alderson, Sue Ann **The Finding Princess**
illus. Jane Wolsak
Fforbez, 1977 31 pages. $.99 paper

Type of Story: Fairy Tale
Setting: An imaginary kingdom
Time: Any time

A discontented little princess sets out to find for herself what she needs to make her happy. Happiness is indeed achieved, but not as she had expected.

Young children were content to have it read to them, and a few beginning readers could manage it themselves. They found it a nice story with happy things in it; the main point of this rather stereotyped moralistic fairy tale was largely lost on them. They did not find it attractive to look at, and boys liked it rather less than girls.

A pleasant, if innocuous, read-aloud for children 5 to 7, or for beginning readers.

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"I learned how not *to draw." Reader #735, 11 year old boy.*

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7-10
★
●

Allen, Robert Thomas **The Violin**
illus. by photographs by George Pastic
McGraw-Hill, 1976 79 pages. $5.95 paper

Type of Story: Friendship
Setting: Urban parkland
Time: Present

Two young boys save their coins to buy a violin, but toss it away when it only produces "squawks". The old man who finds it tutors the older boy in the instrument, and eventually teaches both boys marvelous lessons in friendship and the appreciation of beauty.

Black and white photographs from the award-winning movie on which this book is based convinced most of our readers of the truth of this touching little tale. Simply told, it was quickly and easily read by all except the youngest. The book's large size, large print, and many pictures suggested to some older children that it was a "baby's book" but most, especially those who play an instrument, found it appealing despite their initial reservations.

A touching story, convincingly told for 7 to 10 year olds.

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"I will read almost anything. But I really like adventures." Reader #717, 10 year old boy.

Bellingham, Brenda **Joanie's Magic Boots**

7-11 Tree Frog Press, 1979 125 pages. $3.95 paper $8.95 cloth

★ *Type of Story*: Growing Up
▲ *Setting*: Urban
Time: Present

Joanie wants a pair of boots she sees in a window so badly she steals them, and must face the consequences of what she has done.

This was a very popular book with both boys and girls. They thought it well written and exciting and said they liked that sort of story. A few boys who thought they wouldn't like it because there is a photograph of a girl on the cover were pleasantly surprised. The story succeeds in reaching readers over a wide age range, and though the ending may seem just too pat, the book does appeal very much.

For readers age 7 to 11 who like stories about children their age.

🍁 Bergelt, Diana **Big Max II – Adventure on the Water**

6-9 Borealis, 1977 41 pages. $3.95 paper

★ *Type of Story*: Adventure/Animal
▲ *Setting*: Wilderness lake, British Columbia
Time: Present

Father and mother, together with their young son John, his friend Billy, and Big Max the dog, have some exciting adventures on Sunshine Lake in a rented houseboat.

This is far and away the most successful of the three books in the Big Max series. It was very well liked by the readers, both boys and girls. The short chapters and high interest helped overcome the small print and absence of illustrations. Parents appreciated a book that could be read by younger children but were perturbed by an unconventional use of capitals and a abundant reliance on exclamation. It is Canadian in flavour and in the use of place names. It deserves a much more attractive format and a judicious application of basic rules of style and punctuation.

For boys and girls, ages 6 to 9; younger readers will need help with it.

* * * * * * *

"I enjoyed the book because it was well written, exciting and sort of interesting all at the same time." Reader #370, 12 year old boy.

* * * * * * *

"Not only toys make people happy – you need books and records and many other things." Reader #890, 5 year old girl.

Berton, Pierre **The Secret World of Og**

9-12
●

illus. Patsy Berton
McClelland and Stewart, 1974 (c.1961) 160 pages. $7.95 paper

Type of Story: Fantasy
Setting: City of Og
Time: Present

Five children discover that beneath their playhouse is a secret world of little green people.

Children found this a funny, imaginative book, a very good story. It is fairly long either as a read-aloud or for younger readers, but it was not considered difficult. Its physical size is larger than most children like and not all felt the illustrations too good, but they liked its bright cover and all in all found it a highly enjoyable book.

A fun fantasy for 9 to 12 year olds.

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"The cover is drab and didn't make me want to read it (but) it was interesting and really good." Reader #404, 13 year old girl.

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"I think, – I think that I still didn't understand all the things about that book." Reader #958, 5 year old boy.

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Burns, Florence McLaughlin **Jumbo the Biggest Elephant in All the World**

7-10
★
▲

illus. by photographs, designed by Affie Mohammed
Scholastic-TAB, 1978 58 pages. $1.95 paper

Type of Story: Animal, Non-Fiction
Setting: Urban, England/U.S.A./Canada
Time: 1861-1885

A small, sickly African elephant is brought to London's Regent Park Zoo in 1861. Befriended by keeper Matthew "Scotty" Scott, he thrives and grows to be the largest elephant in the world. This is the true life story of Jumbo's life, his travels in North America with Phineas T. Barnum's circus, and his tragic death at St. Thomas, Ontario.

Readers found this a "true, sad, funny and well-written" and very interesting story, and much of their enjoyment seemed to derive from its being a factual account. Unfortunately most did not appreciate or make a distinction between the photographs, which illustrate the facts, and the drawings, which illustrate the legends that sprang up during the great animal's lifetime. It is difficult reading for 8's and under.

For children 7 to 10; the younger children enjoy it as a read-aloud.

Charles, Norma M. **Amanda Grows Up**

4-7
★
illus. Carol Moran
Scholastic-TAB, 1976 unpaged. $1.75 paper

▲ *Type of Story*: Picture Book/Nature
Setting: City park
Time: Present

Amanda is a hazelnut who is born one spring morning. Through the summer she grows until she falls to the ground and sleeps over the winter. The next year she grows and grows and becomes a tree.

The very attractive drawings and the simple text made this a very pleasant way for young children to learn about how seeds grow. The oldest children liked trying to read it themselves. Parents were also very enthusiastic about the book.

A sure favourite for children 4 to 7.

Charles, Norma M. **See You Later, Alligator**

4-7
★
illus. Carol Moran
Scholastic-TAB, 1974 unpaged. $1.75 paper

▲ *Type of Story*: Animal Fantasy
Setting: Backyard
Time: Any time

The friendship between Allie Alligator and Corky Crocodile is severely strained when they begin to put too much importance on their fine new clothes. Luckily, good sense prevails and they come to understand the real importance of being friends.

Real pleasure was given by this simple story of jealousy overcome, with its scant text and intriguingly detailed line drawings. All except the oldest readers had it read to them, but everyone identified with the feelings of jealousy and appreciated what it is like to be friends.

Highly enjoyed by 4 to 7 year olds as a read-aloud; good readers could read it themselves.

Cleaver, Nancy **How the Chipmunk Got Its Stripes**

5-10
★
illus. Laszlo Gal
Scholastic-TAB, 1975 (c.1973) unpaged. $1.75 paper

▲ *Type of Story*: Folklore: Algonkian Indian
Setting: Wilderness woodlands
Time: Long ago

This Indian legend tells how the little chipmunk received his badge of courage by risking his life to save his friend, the boy.

A very wide age range found solid enjoyment in this story. Readers found it unusually believable for a make-believe story, and moreover "the pictures show what the words tell". It is an easy-to-read book for all but the youngest. Parents enjoyed reading it to the younger children.

One of the more popular Indian legends for 5 to 10 year olds.

Côté, Mark **Shakespeare and the Flying Bed**

6-10
★

illus. by the author
Magook Publishers, 1979 unpaged. $6.95 cloth

Type of Story: Fantasy
Setting: The sky
Time: Any time

When a spring on the family bed snaps, the large Snozola family and their assorted animals, among them a spider named Shakespeare, are catapulted into space. There they became embroiled in the affairs of the people of two cloud kingdoms: the merry, well-fed White Cloud people and the grumpy, malnourished Grey Cloud people.

The author's own illustrations played a large role in the warm reception given this book. Our readers appreciated the colour, detail, and humour of the pictures because they helped them imagine the otherwise farfetched story. The six-year-olds and some older children needed to have the story read to them, but for most it was imaginative, exciting, amusing, and not too difficult.

For boys and girls aged 6 to 10.

Desbarats, Peter **Gabrielle and Selena**

6-10
girls
★
▲

illus. Nancy Grossman
Scholastic-TAB, 1973 unpaged. $1.75 paper

Type of Story: Friendship/Growing Up
Setting: Suburban
Time: Present

Gabrielle and Selena are two "best friends" who decide to become each other. Many surprises, not all pleasant, await them when they go "home".

This is one of the few books which only girls seem to enjoy. They found it a good, funny, realistic story and particularly enjoyed the happy, active illustrations. Except for a few of the youngest, a story of two girls having fun had absolutely no appeal to the boys. Only very good readers in the younger range could read it themselves. This story has an especially good matter-of-fact depiction of families of different racial backgrounds.

For girls 6 to 10, probably as a read-aloud for those under eight.

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"When I read I imagine the events happening and when I see a picture which doesn't look like what I imagined it distracts me." Reader #174, 12 year old girl.

* * * * * * *

"I think it's great to have a book with something about your Granny. ... grandmothers are all the same, very nice." Reader #679, 11 year old girl.

Doyle, Brian **Hey, Dad!**

8-12 Groundwood, 1978 121 pages. $4.95 paper $14.95 cloth

★ *Type of Story*: Growing Up/Travel
▲ *Setting*: Enroute across Canada
Time: Present

A thirteen-year-old girl reluctantly sets off with her family on a camping trip across Canada. In spite of herself, by the time they reach the West Coast she is enjoying both the trip and a new relationship with her dad.

Both boys and girls found this a very funny book and a good adventure. They thought it readily believable and felt they had been in situations like these themselves. It is easy to read for even fairly young readers, and may also appeal to many young teenagers.

Fun and easy for readers 8 to 12, or older.

Drabek, Jan **Melvin the Weather Moose**

4-8 illus. Bob Seguin
★ Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976 32 pages. $2.70 paper

▲ *Type of Story*: Fantasy/Animal Adventure
Setting: Farm, Tupper, British Columbia
Time: Present

Eight-year-old Lise is the youngest member of the Voss family. They live on a farm where knowing what weather is coming is important. Lise finds that with the help of Melvin the moose she can forecast the weather as well as the weather office.

Children liked this both as a read-aloud for younger children and (as it was intended) as an early read-alone book. They enjoyed the pictures and the rather farfetched story which had even adults wondering if it were true. Readers also enjoyed the real setting and the real sounding animal. While the vocabulary of younger children will be stretched, it is easy reading for older children.

For children aged 4 to 8.

Engel, Marian **Adventure at Moon Bay Towers**

5-9 illus. Patricia Cupples
★ Clarke, Irwin, 1974 unpaged. $6.95 cloth

Type of Story: Fantasy/Adventure
Setting: Lakeside cottage
Time: Present

Geraldine and Rufus, bored with life in their apartment, go off one night to enjoy an adventure babysitting a variety of animals in a cottage on an island.

This slim book with excellent illustrations was enjoyed both for its pictures and as a funny adventure story. The well-written text makes it easy to read but exciting enough to hold the readers' interest even at the top of the age range.

A read-aloud or picture book for ages 5 and up, and for readers 8, 9 or slightly older.

Garcia, Claire Watson **The Peanut Plan**

8-10
★
▲

illus. by the author
Kids Can Press, 1979 (c.1975) 64 pages. $2.25 paper

Type of Story: Animal Fantasy/Cookbook
Setting: Woodland
Time: Any time

A young squirrel saves her aging grandmother from a winter's storm, then solves the problem of grandma's feeding herself by planting peanuts around the tree. In the process, she learns the value of experience and book-knowledge and is able to help instill in her contemporaries a respect for old values.

Boys and girls enjoyed this as an interesting animal story with pleasing illustrations – an attractive, enjoyable book. They learned of peanuts and their growth and experimented with the two dozen easy and nutritious peanut recipes. The underlying messages of the importance of conservation and the love of learning also reached them.

For readers aged 8 to 10.

Goresht, Anne **Charlie Choppers Grows and Grows**

4-7

illus. Audrey Mabee
Wholesome Press, 1979 unpaged. $6.95 paper

Type of Story: Health Care
Setting: The home
Time: Present

Charlie Choppers is a little boy who grows every day by eating the right combination of foods and having adequate amounts of fresh air and exercise. This is the first book in a proposed series that will cover a whole range of health and nutrition topics.

Children and parents alike found this a good way to present or reinforce the importance of eating the right foods. At age seven or above, when they could read it themselves, most of the children still enjoyed it but felt that it was too repetitive and that they already knew it was important to eat right. Even younger children did not consider they had learned much, which is surprising considering it is intended as a teaching aid. They enjoyed it though, finding the bright illustrations funny and appealing, and (apparently) the instruction quite acceptable.

Appealing instruction on good nutrition for 4 to 7 year olds.

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"It is very real and convincing, it conveys many feelings without saying them out loud." Reader #576, 12 year old boy.

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"Every sentence put my nose furthering in." Reader #698, 9 year old girl.

Harris, Dorothy Joan **The School Mouse and the Hamster**

6-8
★

illus. Judy Clifford
Warne, 1979 unpaged. $8.95 cloth

Type of Story: Animal Fantasy
Setting: School classroom
Time: Present

While helping his teacher by cleaning boards after school, Jonathan becomes friends with the class pet, a hamster, and his friend the mouse.

Readers found this a nice story with very pleasing illustration. While they enjoyed it quite a lot, the fantasy of the friendship with the mouse did not entirely capture their imaginations: it was a nice story but not much more that that. The older children read it for themselves.

A pleasant story for children 6 to 8.

Hildes, Joey **How the Pelican Got Its Baggy Beak**

4-7
★
▲

illus. by the author
Peguis, 1974 unpaged. $1.95 paper

Type of Story: Picture Book
Setting: Ocean
Time: Long ago

This imaginative, albeit farfetched, explanation of how the pelican got its baggy beak was written and illustrated by a ten-year-old boy.

The book was greatly enjoyed both by those children who read it themselves and by those who had it read to them. They liked the simple story and the crayon illustrations which reminded them of their own drawings, and which they felt reflected perfectly the action of the text. Many readers were impressed by the fact that a child wrote and illustrated the book. Only the older children could read it themselves.

An imaginative story expressively illustrated for 4 to 7 year olds.

Hopkins, Elisabeth Margaret **The Painted Cougar**

4-7

illus. by the author
Talonbooks, 1977 unpaged. $7.95 cloth

Type of Story: Picture Book/Animal Fantasy
Setting: Jungle and town
Time: Any time

Leon the Lion feels that he isn't quite impressive enough on his own to win his love, Lurline. He goes abroad to learn more, and eventually returns to Lurline beautified by body painting, courtesy of his friend the snake. Leon wins Lurline, loses his painted designs, and finds that Lurline appreciates him for himself.

Children did not grasp the lesson in this story – discussion would bring that out – but enjoyed the book anyway. Most especially, they liked the illustrations, and all the little details in them.

Suitable to be read to 4 to 7 year olds, possibly a bit long to read alone although some 7's and even 8's might enjoy doing so.

Hughes, Monica **Crisis on Conshelf Ten**

10-14+ Copp Clark, 1975 144 pages. $4.25 cloth

★ *Type of Story*: Science Fiction
● *Setting*: Undersea colony
Time: Early 21st century

Kepler, fifteen-year-old son of the Governor of the Moon Colony, makes his first visit to Earth and finds himself made ill by the gravitational force. He must spend the remainder of the time before returning home with relatives who live in an undersea colony, Conshelf Ten. There he discovers resentment against the central government giving rise to a separatist movement.

It is a rare book that readers say is "captivating", but that is how several described this one. Although a few found it slow at the beginning, overwhelmingly they described it as really well written and exciting, and they appreciated it as a believable look at the future. Quite aside from the enjoyment, which was high at all ages, there is ample substance to stimulate older readers to discuss the technology of establishing colonies on the moon or underwater, on ecology and sea farming, and on the politics of colonies.

Eminently successful for children aged 10 to 14 or older.

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"I like magic." Reader #923, 5 year old girl.

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"The child in the story is about the same age as me so I understood most of her thoughts." Reader #667, 10 year old girl.

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Knapp, Bill **Ryan's Goal**

6-9 illus. Ken MacDougall
boys Magook Publishers, 1979 unpaged. Out of print

★ *Type of Story*: Sports/Hockey
Setting: Suburban
Time: Present

Ryan is afraid to go to hockey school as his Dad would like him to. One evening he falls asleep while watching an NHL game on television, and dreams he becomes the hero of the game while playing with a team of men. On awakening he decides he might like to go to hockey school after all.

This is a well-presented book and all of the children found it appealing in appearance and liked the bright illustrations. The story however, really only appealed to the boys; they were quite keen on it. It is a bit difficult for young beginning readers, but because it is colourful and fast moving, it appeals both to them and to somewhat older readers who appreciate an easy book about a subject they like.

For budding hockey players aged 6 to 9, or even older.

Kronby, Madeline **A Secret in My Pocket**

5-7 illus. Anna Vojtech
Magook Publishers, 1977 unpaged. Out of print

Type of Story: Lifestyle
Setting: Urban, Montreal, Quebec
Time: Present

Michelle badly wants a pet of her own and takes a frog home as her "secret in her pocket". Gigi the frog causes problems, but Michelle's parents find a nice solution. The story is mainly in English, but incorporates some French.

Reviewed by children aged five to ten, it was found to be by far the most successful when it was read aloud to the younger ones. Those who attempted to read it themselves seemed either daunted by the difficulty of the text or felt the story itself too young. There seemed no difference in response whether the children were in French Immersion or English classes. Parents were enthusiastic about it, and this adult enthusiasm might be transmitted to some of the older children if it were also read to them.

Best appreciated as a read-aloud for children 5 to 7.

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Q. What do you like to read most? A. "Books with happy endings."
Reader #484, 6 year old girl.

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Laurence, Margaret **The Olden Days Coat**

7-11 illus. Muriel Wood
★ McClelland and Stewart, 1979 unpaged. $9.95 paper
●

Type of Story: Historical Fantasy/Lifestyle
Setting: Village, rural Ontario
Time: Present/Recent past

Ten-year-old Sal has to spend Christmas at her grandmother's house in a small village. Lonesome and bored, she finds an old-fashioned coat in an old trunk. She puts it on and goes back in time to another Christmas.

The appearance of the book deterred some readers; it has a rather dark cover illustration and a childish- looking shape, and the format and large print implied easier reading than the story really had. Yet when these obstacles were overcome, it was very successful: story and illustrations were very well liked both by the children and (especially) by their parents. Not overtly "Canadian" in text, the superior illustrations depict typical small town Ontario. Younger readers may need quite a bit of help to read it themselves.

Much enjoyed by children 7 to 11.

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"The feeling got to me." Reader #655, 10 year old boy.

Little, Jean **From Anna**

9-12
★
▲
●

illus. Joan Sandin
Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1977 201 pages. $2.75 paper

Type of Story: Growing Up/Multiculturalism
Setting: Urban, Ontario
Time: 1930's

At nine and unable to read, Anna, youngest of the five children in a family in Germany, is teased by her brothers and sisters because she is so slow and awkward. Political unease propels the family to emigrate to Canada where they discover Anna has a severe sight impairment. She goes to a special school where she adjusts to her new country and develops a new sense of self-respect.

Children found this a heartwarming story, one that was compelling reading and very moving. The younger readers found it long, but all gained deeper understanding of how to cope with a handicap, and something about courage and determination. They also developed a feeling of what it was like to live in "those troubled times", and to be an immigrant.

Excellent reading for children aged 9 to 12, or older.

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"I like to learn about my country." Reader #11, 10 year old boy."

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Little, Jean **Look through My Window**

9-14
★
▲
●

illus. Jean Sandin
Harper & Row, 1971 (c.1970) 258 pages. $3.95 paper

Type of Story: Lifestyle/Growing Up
Setting: Small town, Ontario
Time: Present

Emily, an only child , and her parents move from a city apartment to a large old house in a small town. Four young cousins whose mother is ill come to live with them for a year, and the whole family adjusts to its new situation and new friends. A classmate who is from a Jewish-Gentile family becomes Emily's best friend and they share their "secret" interests.

While girls enjoyed this slightly more than boys, the difference was very slight. Both found it a very good story. "It's the sort of book I like" was a frequent remark. They found it believable and realistic, as well as thought-provoking. While it is quite long, the readers did not seem to mind and even the nine-year-olds read it themselves. Adults felt it had great merit. While not explicit in its "Canadianism", the readers felt very at home with it.

A story of substance for 9 to 14 year olds, especially but not exclusively for girls.

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"I enjoyed the book because it was happy sometimes and sad the other." Reader #740, 10 year old girl.

Logie, Ray **The Bee Who Never Slept**

3-7
▲ illus. Catharine MacKenzie
Fforbez, 1977 32 pages. $.99 paper

Type of Story: Animal Fantasy
Setting: Beehive, fields
Time: Any time

Peter Pollen is a bee who solves his problem of insomnia in a very enterprising way.

Containing an odd mixture of fantasy and realism, the story struck the readers as cute, funny, amusing, and nice. They were particularly attracted to the detail in the humourous drawings. The substantial amount of factual information woven into the story was used by some parents as a springboard for instructive chats on bees and their habits; however, the short simple story and illustrations alone were sufficient to sustain the young listeners. Many parents were put off by "cutesy" dialogue and tendency to alliterative repetition, and did not enjoy reading it.

A read-aloud for children 3 to 7.

Mackay, Claire **Exit Barney McGee**

11-13
★ illus. David Simpson
Scholastic-TAB, 1979 146 pages. $1.50 paper

▲ *Type of Story*: Growing Up
Setting: Urban, Toronto area
Time: Present

Feeling displaced by his new stepfather and new baby sister, thirteen-year-old Barney determines to locate his real father. He has many dangerous and maturing experiences as he comes to terms with reality.

Barney's dilemma touched a sympathetic nerve in the readers: they felt it a very believable situation, especially these days, and many of them felt they understood such problems and emotions better. They found it a fast-paced and exciting story that is easy to read. While mature readers may find it facile, the age for whom it is apparently intended did not, and it would probably appeal to slightly older readers who enjoy books of this sort.

For boys and girls aged 11 to 13, or older.

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Q. Can you imagine the events happening? A. "Everyone knows little boys can cook." Reader #631, 4 year old boy.

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"It was natural, the author didn't dream up all these things that couldn't really happen." Reader #580, 10 year old girl.

Mackay, Claire **Mini-Bike Hero**

9-13
★

illus. Merle Smith
Scholastic-TAB, 1978 (c.1974) 105 pages. $1.50 paper

▲

Type of Story: Adventure/Growing Up
Setting: Small prairie town, Saskatchewan
Time: Present

With perseverence and hard work, Steve acquires his longed-for mini-bike. He does it secretly with the help of a cycle shop owner who understands his passion, because his father does not want him to have a bike. He learns the skills of handling a cycle carefully, and vindicates his actions in an exciting conclusion.

Although readers thought this was a boy's book, both boys and girls liked it the same – a lot! They found it an exceptionally believable situation (several called it "normal") but also very adventurous and exciting. It had rare success in reaching this age group and would probably appeal to some older mini-bikers as well. It stresses strongly the importance of good driving habits.

Exciting reading for boys and girls aged 9 to 13, or older.

MacKenzie, Jean **Storm Island**

8-11
★

illus. Gordon Rayner
Macmillan, 1968 115 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Adventure/Growing Up
Setting: Small island near Vancouver, British Columbia
Time: Present

An eleven-year-old Vancouver boy spends an enforced visit with an aunt, uncle, and two young cousins on a tiny, remote lighthouse island. He experiences great difficulty fitting into the family until a violent storm lashes the island and he comes to the rescue.

Readers were immediately attracted by the colourful, exciting looking cover, and were rewarded by a simply told adventure too exciting to put down. The isolation and danger of island life are well portrayed. Younger readers will find it challenging, but worthwhile.

For lovers of adventure stories aged 8 to 11.

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"It was good but boring." Reader #143, 10 year old boy.

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"The sentences match with the pictures." Reader #814, 10 year old girl.

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"It was fast paced, exciting, and realistic to how kids act and talk today." Reader #370, 12 year old boy.

McCarthy, Michael J. **The Journey Home**

11-14 Macmillan, 1978 146 pages. $2.30 paper

★ *Type of Story*: Growing Up/Lifestyle
▲ *Setting*: Outport, Newfoundland
Time: Present

David is a seventeen-year-old orphan who runs away from the last of a succession of unhappy foster homes. After a tragic brush with the law, he escapes to a Newfoundland outport to rebuild his life and eventually to face mature and responsible decisions.

Readers almost unanimously found this a good book. They liked the plot and its excitement, sympathized with the hero and were interested in how he resolved his problems. They felt the story was realistic, the hero "human". The only dissenters were those older readers who felt unchallenged by it, or the very youngest who didn't relate to the feelings. It was felt to portray the life of a Newfoundland outport well.

For readers age 11 to 14, or older.

McKim, Audrey **Pun and Fuzzles!**

8-11 illus. Dodie McKim
★ Scholastic-TAB, 1974 89 pages. $1.50 paper

▲ *Type of Book*: Puzzle

This is a book of jokes, puns, tricks, and crosswords, almost all of which teach something about the various provinces of Canada.

Children obviously enjoyed being taught about their country in such an entertaining fashion: their reports implied a great sense of fun. Parents were also very enthusiastic about it. The cover pictures made it look young to the older children who still enjoyed the contents. Some of the puzzles were difficult for the younger children but they enjoyed doing what they could.

Great fun for children 8 to 11, or even older if they like doing puzzles.

McLaughlin, Lorrie **The Trouble with Jamie**

7-10 illus. Lewis Parker
★ Macmillan, 1966 98 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Historical Adventure
Setting: At sea, off Liverpool, Nova Scotia
Time: 1800

When Jamie accidentally finds himself on board a privateer, a place he had dreamed of being, he finds he will need more than the glib tongue he used on land to come through his adventures honourably.

This was well enjoyed as a straight forward adventure story by the younger readers, and with more understanding of the humour and moral by the older ones. To all of them the historical context seemed largely irrelevant. To the more accomplished readers it was hardly long enough for a "real book".

For boys and girls aged 7 to 10 or older if they don't mind the brevity and large print.

Schemenauer, Elma **Newton McTootin and the Bang-Bang Tree**

4-10

illus. Ken Stampnick
Magook Publishers, 1979 · unpaged. Out of print

Type of Story: Fantasy/Lifestyle
Setting: Urban
Time: Present

Newton McTootin is a lonely newcomer to the city who misses his western prairie homeland. Prairie friends send him a "bang-bang tree" to plant and remind him of his home, but the noise of this plant disturbs his new neighbours. In finding a solution, Newton also makes new city friends.

A wide age range found appeal in this colourfully illustrated and amusing story. The message of neighbourly cooperation is pleasantly told, if rather implausibly, via the device of the "bang-bang tree". Children under seven needed help in reading it, but older readers found it short and easy.

For children 4 to 10.

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"The hard cover makes it seem important." Reader #756, 7 year old boy.

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"I like books to be scary and really good." Reader #883, 9 year old girl.

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Seager, Joan **The Vengeance of Wol**

9-12

illus. Charles Hilder
Scholastic-TAB, 1978 (c.1966) 144 pages. $1.50 paper

Type of Story: Mystery
Setting: Town, suburban, Eastern Canada
Time: Present

The clever sleuthing of Jeff, his friends Buster and Rosemary, and their assistant, the pet owl Wol, reveals who is causing all the trouble for Jeff's biologist uncle.

Most readers liked the look of this book; they thought they would enjoy it, and in fact they did. They said it was exciting, suspenseful, fun, and easy to read. Some of them even felt they'd learned a bit about biology. Older readers found it a little contrived, but good fun just the same.

For readers 9 to 12 or older who like a fast-moving mystery story.

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"It looks as though it might be good, but it wasn't." Reader #751, 7 year old girl.

Stren, Patti **There's a Rainbow in My Closet**

9-11 illus. by the author
Harper and Row, 1979 136 pages. $11.75 cloth

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: Urban
Time: Present

Emma is a sensitive little girl who expresses her feelings through her drawings. Frightened when she learns her mother is going away and her grandmother is taking care of her, she finds her grandmother understands her and her drawings better than anyone else.

Readers enjoyed the story immensely because they understood the fears and feelings of being misunderstood and rejoiced with Emma's finding someone who really knew how she felt. The illustrations were a fitting complement to the story. Readers were happily oblivious to the chronological and other inconsistencies and Emma's unremitting self-centredness. They found it a heartwarming story, full of feeling. Younger children who were very good readers would probably also enjoy it.

Children 9 to 11 had empathy with the heroine.

Thurman, Mark **The Elephant's Cold**

3-7 illus. by the author
★ NC Press, 1979 unpaged. $3.95 paper

▲ *Type of Story*: Picture Book/Health Care
Setting: The home
Time: Any time

Everyone has the perfect cure for Douglas the Elephant's cold. Ultimately he learns that bed and plenty of rest, as his mother had advised in the first place, will effect a cure more rapidly than spending time trying all the other cures he has been urged to use.

The bright, amusing pictures illustrating this brief-and-to-the-point little story were particularly popular. Young beginning readers found it easy to read themselves, and all understood the message very well. Children found it an attractive, cheerful, undemanding book; while it lacks the substance to engross young readers who want challenge, it would probably be ideal for a sick child who could commiserate with Douglas and his malaise.

A cheery lesson for children 3 to 7.

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"It's a really good book that leaves you with a satisfied feeling. It ends where it should end." Reader #564, 11 year old girl.

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"I like it because it has more pictures than the Hardy Boys." Reader #253, 6 year old boy.

Tierney, Frank M. **Silly Sally and the Golden-Pail**

5-7
★ illus. Wendy Irvine
Borealis, 1977 unpaged. . $3.95 paper

Type of Story: Fantasy/Adventure
Setting: Child's room and on the moon
Time: Present

Transported to the moon with the help of Star Girl and her magic steps, Sally helps the Moon People with their problems with the Mud Snouts.

Boys and girls alike enjoyed having this adventure read to them, and colouring the last picture of Sally themselves. The binding is very fragile for a book for this age group.

A read-aloud book for 5 to 7 year olds.

Toye, William **The Fire Stealer**

5-7
★ illus. Elizabeth Cleaver
Oxford, 1979 unpaged. $6.95 cloth

● *Type of Story*: Folklore: Ojibwa Indian/Art Book
Setting: Wilderness, Northern Ontario
Time: Long ago

In a re-creation of an Ojibwa legend, the creator-magician Nanabozho brings fire to his people and causes the trees to change colour every year thereafter to remember the event.

Both parents and children were enthusiastic about the book, most especially because of the magnificent artwork. They found the story a good introduction to legends; certainly the legend itself was much better liked and understood in this work than in Cleaver and Toye's other collaborations. The simple direct style made it successful as a read-aloud story, and it could appeal to readers not yet confident enough to tackle more wordy books. The appeal of the illustrations was universal.

Successful as a read-aloud for children 5 to 7, for older readers to read themselves, or as a picture book for all ages.

Walker, David **Big Ben**

9-12 Collins, 1969 134 pages. Out of print
★ *Type of Story*: Animal
Setting: Rural, Maine, U.S.A.
Time: Recent past

After helping people involved in a car accident near their farm, Tim and Jenny are given a St. Bernard pup. The many problems that ensue between Ben's owners and the community are all worked out satisfactorily.

Considered a well-written, easily read, and interesting animal adventure, this book can be enjoyed by good readers as young as eight.

Widely enjoyed by children 9 to 12 who like animal stories.

7-10 Walters, Harold **Grunion and the Algonquin Go-Dribblers: A Book About Basketball**

illus. John Robertson
McClelland and Stewart, 1973 unpaged. $3.95 paper

Type of Story: Sports/Animal Fantasy
Setting: Town, Northern Ontario
Time: Present

The Algonquin Go-Dribblers, having lost 2283 games, send for a "used basketball player" to assist them. Instead, they get Grunion, a "Fijian bookbinding cat", who must be taught how to play basketball before he can help them win.

Children enjoyed this mostly for the funny story and the bright cartoon pictures, but they also learned a little of the history, rules, and skills of basketball embedded in the nonsense. Some less-skilled or younger readers may need help in reading it. The attempt to be non-sexist is not fully successful.

Enthusiastically read by 7 to 10 year olds who have some interest in basketball.

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"Things don't always go your way like in other stories ... I can relate my problems to the ones in the book. "Reader # 29, 11 year old girl.

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7-9 Walters, Harold **Grunion's Hockey Album**

illus. John Robertson
McClelland and Stewart, 1973 unpaged. $3.95 paper

Type of Story: Sports/Animal Fantasy
Setting: Hockey rink at Hudson's Bay
Time: Present

Grunion the cat is looking for friends and finds companionship at the hockey rink. However, he has to learn how to skate and play the game before he is fully accepted.

Both boys and girls enjoyed learning about hockey in an amusing way. Colourful cartoon pictures throughout had high appeal to the readers. Children didn't seem to mind the "patronizing adult" style nor the depiction of the girl players as Amazonian terrors; they just enjoyed the fun. Some younger children may find it too hard to read without help.

Good fun and instructive for hockey enthusiasts ages 7 to 9, or slightly older if they'd like to learn more.

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"I like the thought that it was written by a 14 year old boy." Reader #410, 13 year old boy.

Wilson, Eric **Vancouver Nightmare**

10-14
★

illus. Tom McNeely
Clarke, Irwin, 1978 100 pages. $7.95 cloth

Type of Story: Mystery
Setting: Urban, Vancouver, British Columbia
Time: Present

Would-be detective Tom Austen accidentally becomes involved with a drug ring while vacationing at his grandparents' home in Vancouver. He becomes caught in a nightmare situation that seems for a while to be impossible to get out of.

Both boys and girls (almost unanimously) found this a suspense-filled and exciting book that was quickly and easily read. It contains sobering descriptions of the effect of drugs and the seamier side of the drug scene that seemed to make an impression, and was perhaps upsetting to some of the younger readers. Readers are made more familiar with the Vancouver setting.

Easy escapist reading for 10 to 14 year olds, or even older.

Wolk, Darlene **Mrs. Poppy's Great Idea!**

7-9
▲

illus. Anita Kunz
Kids Can Press, 1979 43 pages. $2.25 paper

Type of Story: Lifestyle
Setting: Urban, Toronto, Ontario
Time: Present

Mrs. Poppy enjoys living in her new apartment but she misses having a garden. She talks the city into renting her an empty rubbish-strewn lot for $1.00 a year. Then with the aid of her seven-year-old friend Robbie, and many others, the lot is transformed into a community garden.

This book had strong appeal as a pleasant story of cooperation, a nice account of how to get something done. While the story line appealed to the younger children, most required help in reading it. Perhaps because of this the readers appreciated the black and white illustrations as an aid in following the story. Mrs. Poppy is an excellent role-model of an elderly person who is capable and well worth listening to.

Pleasant as a read-aloud book for ages 7 to 9 or for very good readers to read themselves.

GROUP III

Around 75% of the children in the indicated age ranges enjoyed these books very much. This is a large group, and includes many books which were quite popular but not outstandingly so, as well as those for which individual tastes limit their general acceptance. However, for those with special interests good reading abounds, particularly among the historical fiction, folklore, and Indian, Inuit,and "real life" stories.

The quotes from children that are interspersed among the reviews illustrate some of the trends in children's opinions. Please note that they do not refer specifically to the books listed on the same page.

For an explanation of the marginal symbols and of the evaluation process, see the Explanatory Notes (pp. 1-4).

Acland, Eric **Drums of Niagara**

10-13 illus. Marjorie Lusk Fortey
Nelson, 1967 (c.1953) 226 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Historical: Early Settlement/Loyalists
Setting: Niagara/Hamilton, Ontario
Time: 1776 to about 1790

Ten-year-old Peter Hartley and his Loyalist family flee to safety at Fort Niagara, where Peter eventually grows up as an important member of the settlement.

The usual small corps of young historical fiction readers found this a really good, exciting adventure, but it did not sustain the interest of the older readers. While not difficult, it is fairly long and a little old fashioned in style. It is an accurate portrayal of the life and times of the Loyalist settlement, and readers also appreciated it for that.

Enjoyable historical fiction for readers 10 to 13.

Alderson, Sue Ann **Bonnie McSmithers You're Driving Me Dithers**

3-7
▲

illus. Fiona Garrick
Tree Frog Press, 1974 55 pages. $4.95 paper $7.95 cloth

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: A child's home
Time: Present

Bonnie McSmithers amuses herself and tries her mother's patience with a succession of misdemeanors until she gets the attention she wants.

The repetitive wording of Mrs. McSmithers' admonitions intrigued the young children, as did the name "Bonnie McSmithers" itself. They also were delighted by and identified with Bonnie's escapades; they did, or would like to do, or used to do, things like that. The story gives a chance to talk about getting along in a family; otherwise, the connection the story makes between misbehaving and success in getting attention may be interpreted differently by parent and child.

Most successful as a read-aloud or beginning reader for children 3 to 7.

Bailey, Paul **Charlie Meets the Goomby**

5-9
★

illus. Dan Wladyka
Magook Publishers, 1977 unpaged. $6.95 cloth

Type of Story: Fantasy
Setting: Island in the Land of Urd
Time: Any time

This is the tale of how Charlie Pildare frees the Goomby from an evil spell and rescues the people of Urd from the oppression they have suffered while their leader was bewitched.

The somewhat scary impression of the attractive illustrations intrigued the readers, and a happy conclusion relieved them. They reported sustained, if not intense, enjoyment of the story – even the youngest ones who had it read aloud.

For children who enjoy fantasy; good reading for 7 to 9 year olds, or older, or as a read-aloud book for 5 and 6 year olds.

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"The use of colour gave me feeling, eg. one picture was all red which gave me happy feelings." Reader #617, 9 year old girl.

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"The cover isn't interesting, to put it straight, the book it's good, but the cover is ROTTEN." Reader #370, 12 year old boy.

Bannerji, Himani **The Two Sisters**

7-10
▲

illus. Khaletun Majumder
Kids Can Press, 1978 unpaged. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Bengali
Setting: Village, India
Time: Long ago

This is a Bengali folktale, told in both English and Bengalese, about two stepsisters and their mothers – one pair poor but kind and helpful; the other, greedy and selfish. As in all such tales with a moral, the kind sister is rewarded with wealth and beauty and the greedy, rude sister is duly punished.

Readers most often liked the story because it was "interesting". Girls tended to appreciate both the story and the illustrations more than boys. While the aim of the book apparently is to teach moral values and differences between Bengali customs and ours, neither boys nor girls felt they learned anything from reading it. Perhaps these moral and cultural implications would have more impact if the book were read aloud and explained.

For readers 7 to 10.

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"I liked the book because it could never happen in real life." Reader #807, 10 year old girl.

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"Being a girl I'd like to have a story about a girl." Reader #650, 8 year old girl.

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Bergelt, Diana **Big Max I – Adventure in the Forest**

6-8
★
▲

Borealis, 1977 31 pages. $3.95 paper

Type of Story: Adventure/Animal
Setting: City and forest
Time: Present

Max, a big German Shepherd dog, goes hiking in the forest with Mother, Dad, their son John, and his new friend Billy. They have some adventures and Dad tells stories about Grandfather.

This book, the first of a series of three written expressly for primary grade readers, had most appeal to those who had it read aloud (which seems to negate its purpose) and was unenthusiastically tolerated by those who did read it themselves. The extremely small print and the lack of illustrations are detractions, but the short chapters are something of an asset. The flavour of forest, mountain, and the wildlife in the story had appeal to animal/nature fans.

For children 6 to 8 who enjoy short simple outdoor stories.

Bleeks, Sheila J. **The Gift of the Frost Fairy**

5-8 illus. Kelly Clark
Cherry, 1976 23 pages. $6.95 cloth

Type of Story: Fairy Tale
Setting: A child's bedroom
Time: Any time

Froska, the best frost painter in all of the fairy kingdom, brings light and health to a sick boy through her pictures.

Children enjoyed this story because of its magic, and although it is sad in part, it also has a happy ending. They found the subtly coloured illustrations reminiscent of frost and cold. Parents liked it too. It is best as a read-aloud book, but the oldest could read it for themselves.

For children 5 to 8 who like fairy stories.

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"Dinosaurs are my favorite thing." Reader #604, 5 year old boy.

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Brain, Sharon **My Mother Made Me!**

10-14 Scholastic-TAB, 1978 122 pages. $1.50 paper

★ *Type of Story*: Sports/Growing Up
▲ *Setting*: Small town, Ontario
Time: Present

Appalled when one of their mothers decides to enroll them on a girls' hockey team, four teenage girls decide to run away. Choosing the arena as their hideout because it is the least likely place people will search for them, they spend several days discovering some things about themselves and about hockey.

Readers found this one of the rare books that is funny, believable, and topical. Predictably, girls were much more inclined to read it than boys and they almost unanimously gave it top rating. Many of the boys who read it also enjoyed it immensely. Its dual message, that girls can participate and that one should be open-minded about trying new things, was understood by both boys and girls.

A timely story about growing up for readers 10 to 14, or even older, in easy reading form.

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"It pictures it in my brain and I feel I am doing it myself." Reader #608, 7 year old boy.

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"I like it so much I want to keep it forever." Reader #641, 5 year old boy.

Brown, Susan **The Black Tunnel**

11-14 illus. Maureen Shaughnessy
Scholastic-TAB, 1978 171 pages. $1.50 paper

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: Rural, Niagara Escarpment, Ontario
Time: Present

Tom becomes the object of taunts and jeers because his claustrophobia prevents him from accomplishing the rites of initiation into the local gang, "The Cobras". Thrown together with another social outcast, intelligent but physically uncoordinated Andrew, he discovers his own strengths as well as Andrew's.

Both boys and girls found this a good book. They felt it was interesting, had a good story line, was easy to read, and they understood the people and the situation. They did not like the look of the cover, though. Some younger children can also enjoy it if they are good readers. It describes the geography and the flora and fauna of the Escarpment area well.

A realistic adventure for readers 11 to 14 and perhaps older.

Burnford, Sheila **The Incredible Journey**

9-14+ PaperJacks, 1973 (c.1960) 127 pages. $1.75 paper

Type of Story: Realistic Animal
Setting: Forest wilderness, Northern Ontario
Time: Present

A Siamese cat, a Labrador retriever, and a bull terrier set out on a truly incredible journey across 300 miles of forest wilderness to find their master.

The simple, direct style, sustained suspense, and illustrations that fit the story were the factors in the unusually broad acceptance that this book received. Readers were emphatic when they liked it a lot, and none really disliked it. It is a short story in a very attractive paperback format.

Equally well liked by readers from 9 to adult, it would probably also be appreciated as a read-aloud book by even younger children.

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"I like books that have a good climax, excitement, and are not too long." Reader #144, 10 year old boy.

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"Short chapters are good." Reader #786, 7 year old girl.

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"I don't think I would read it if I hadn't looked inside it. It looks too much for little kids." Reader #909, 9 year old girl.

Chandon, Odarka **Kyrylo the Tanner**

7-8 illus. Ihor Haras Mykytyn
★ Kids Can Press, 1977 unpaged. $2.95 paper

▲ *Type of Story*: Folklore: Ukrainian
Setting: Small kingdom, Ukraine
Time: Long ago

A Ukrainian folktale printed in both English and Ukrainian, this tale tells how Kyrylo the tanner manages to save the King's daughter, rid Kiev of the dragon, and become a national hero.

The book was reviewed by children from 5 to 10 years; neither the story line nor the illustrations found favour with the younger readers (five to six), and the older (nine to ten) tended to think the fairy tale idea beneath them. Thus, its modest appeal was limited to seven- and eight-year-olds who liked fairy tales. While it engendered no real enthusiasm, neither did it engender real dislike. It might also appeal as an easy-to-read book for slightly older readers who especially like the genre.

For children 7 or 8, or slightly older, if they enjoy fairy tales.

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"It has too many unbeliefs." Reader #819, 9 year old boy.

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"I usually don't look at the pictures." Reader #86, 12 year old girl.

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"It confirms that growing up is a difficult process." Reader #685, 10 year old boy.

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Chetin, Helen **The Lady of the Strawberries**

9-12 girls illus. Anita Kunz
PMA Books, 1978 89 pages. $8.95 cloth

★ *Type of Story*: Growing Up
● *Setting*: Rural, Alberta
Time: Present

Ten-year-old Jessica, living with her divorced father on a prairie farm, places her hopes and dreams in growing strawberries. The patch is guarded by a "scarerobin", the "Lady", which becomes a confidante and substitute mother in Jessica's fantasies. A prairie storm which almost destroys Jessica and her Lady helps her see the situation more realistically.

This book was understood on two levels, as an exciting story of growing strawberries and a storm (by younger garls and boys) and as a sensitive portrait of the emotional turmoil and confusion of a child suffering through a family breakdown (by the older girls). It might have special relevance to any child who has suffered or is facing such a problem.

Restrained enjoyment was expressed by girls 9 to 12, and a few younger boys.

Clark, Margaret Goff **Mystery at Star Lake**

9-12 illus. E. Harper Johnson
★ Scholastic-TAB, 1974 (c.1965) 120 pages. $1.50 paper

▲ *Type of Story*: Mystery
Setting: Lakelands near Algonquin Park, Ontario
Time: Present

When thirteen-year-old Jeff goes to help his older brother build an addition to their cottage on a lake they are greeted by a red-painted sign on their door: "*get out*". Two other children join Jeff in his search for a solution to the mystery: who wants to get rid of them, and why?

This was reasonably well enjoyed. Many found it exciting and suspenseful, and it offended almost no one. The characters are cardboard figures and readily forgettable. Readers reported learning quite a bit about the operations of poachers.

For readers 9 to 12, especially those who like mysteries.

Cox, Rita **How Trouble Made the Monkey Eat Pepper**

5-7 illus. Roy Crosse
▲ Kids Can Press, 1977 unpaged. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: West Indian
Setting: Village, Trinidad
Time: Long ago

This West Indian folktale is about a monkey who thought molasses was called "trouble". When he went into town to buy this "trouble", he didn't get molasses but he did get trouble.

This book was enjoyed as much for the funny "giggly" tale as for the lessons to be learned, both morally and on Trinidadian customs. The simple rythmic prose was enjoyed; the rather fuzzy black and white illustrations and the book's general appearance were not. Those who enjoyed it most were children whose parents read it to them and talked with them about it.

Especially good as a read-aloud ethnic study for children aged 5 to 7.

Craig, John **The Wormburners**

10-13 illus. Alan Daniel
★ Scholastic-TAB, 1975 159 pages. $1.50 paper

▲ *Type of Story*: Sports: Cross-country running
Setting: Urban
Time: Present

An inner city cross-country team (to quote a reviewer) "go through disaster and disappointment to claim their chance at the top".

Both boys and girls, but especially boys, found this a satisfactory and enjoyable story. They found it extremely believable, and they could identify with the situation. It is well paced, if not full of action, and easy reading for anyone interested in achievement in sports.

For sports-minded boys or girls aged 10 to 13, or older.

DeVries, John **In My Back Yard**

4-7
★
▲

illus. Jeff Wakefield
Scholastic-TAB, 1975 unpaged. $1.50 paper

Type of Story: Picture Book
Setting: Back yard
Time: Present

When a little boy is forbidden to keep his new-found pet frog, in the house, he moves it into the dog house, which already has a varied assortment of shared possessions.

The simple bright illustrations attracted and amused the young children, especially the depiction of the frog. They found it very funny. The sparse story, in rhyme, tends to bog down though, and children found the promise of the first half not fulfilled in the second. The bold print and simple text did encourage some beginning readers to read on their own.

A funny picture book for 4 to 7 year olds.

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"The pictures are very flamboyant. [They were] marvellously captured."
Reader #93, 10 year old girl.

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"[I liked the book] because it had a happy ending and the girl was seven."
Reader #484, 7 year old girl.

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Engel, Marian **My Name is Not Odessa Yarker**

9-10
▲

illus. Laszlo Gal
Kids Can Press, 1977 unpaged. $6.95 cloth $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: Urban
Time: Present

Nine-year-old Rufus announces to the school that his ten-year-old sister Geraldine has changed her name to "Odessa Yarker". Geraldine is miserable about being re-named for a highway sign and goes about redressing the situation.

The appeal of a book is seldom so limited to such a narrow age range. The large unnumbered pages and abundant illustration (which the readers found tolerably good) make it look "young", but readers under nine found it just too difficult to read comfortably and did not really understand the sibling rivalry. For children older than ten both the format and the story were too juvenile. The love-hate relationship between brother and sister struck a chord among those who could both read well enough and identify with the situation.

A short but not easy story for 9 and 10 year olds, or older readers who don't mind a young looking book.

Franklyn, Mary Eliza **Pepper Makes Me Sneeze**

7-14+ illus. by the author
Petheric, 1978 120 pages. $4.95 paper

Type of Book: Cookbook

Good recipes – many from Nova Scotia – are presented in an attractive format with a practical spiral spine binding. Pen and ink illustrations of cooking utensils are a bonus.

Ideal for introducing a child to cooking, this book is full of helpful tips for cooks of all ages. The illustrations were considered both entertaining and instructive. Interspersed among the recipes and hints are little notes on foods and their origins; unfortunately many of these notes are poorly researched and inaccurate. As a cookbook though, it was greatly enjoyed by all except those who refuse to cook.

For all boys and girls in the kitchen from 7 up.

Ganton, Doris L. **Lucky, the Horse Nobody Wanted**

9-13 Hancock, 1976 143 pages. $3.50 cloth

Type of Story: Animal
Setting: Rural, Ottawa area, Ontario
Time: Recent

This first book of a projected series about a horse named Lucky is mostly concerned with the difficult life of the equine heroine's mother, Lucky's own troubled early life, and her eventual rescue by horse-loving Sharon.

Those readers who like adventures about horses found this quite an absorbing little book. Not at all difficult to read, it can be enjoyed by certain readers either older or younger than the ages suggested here. Ostensibly taking place in the Ottawa area, the descriptions of locale are poor.

For horse story fans aged 9 to 13.

Hanna, Nell **Thistle Creek**

11-14+ Borealis, 1978 231 pages. $8.95 paper
girls *Type of Story*: Biography/Teaching
Setting: Rural, Alberta
Time: 1927-28

This is an autobiographical account of the daily life of a young woman during her first year teaching in a one-room school.

Many girls enjoyed this immensely. They seemed to identify with the capable handling of adult problems by a girl close to their own age. It was not liked (or even read) by boys, less keen readers, nor those with a definite preference for adventure. The lurid pink and black cover is a considerable liability: almost no one would have chosen to read the book. Even some of those who did took some persuasion, yet described it as fantastic, one of the best books read. It is a substantial book and the younger ones would have to be enthusiastic readers.

An interesting biography for girls age 11 up.

Hill, Kay **Badger, the Mischief Maker**

8-11

illus. John Hamberger
McClelland and Stewart, 1977 (c.1965) 95 pages. $4.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Wabanaki Indian
Setting: Wilderness, Maritimes
Time: Long ago

A prank-playing youth named Badger has many amusing escapades before he realizes the meaning of kindness.

This was thoroughly enjoyed, but more for the adventure than the moral. The humour and excitement have appeal to those too young to read it for themselves, particularly if parents can take the time to explain the vocabulary and the moral. It is an interesting and undemanding story for the older readers.

One of the most successful Indian stories we have encountered, it is enjoyed by readers 8 to 11, and many either younger or older.

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"I don't like these kind of books. It's a book where the subject has a problem then gets over it and has another, etc.." Reader #302, 11 year old boy.

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"The pictures are of no importance." Reader #431, 14 year old boy.

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"I read a great variety of books and have no real preferences ... I always just plow through the book." Reader #82, 14 year old boy.

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Hill, Kay **Glooscap and His Magic: Legends of the Wabanaki Indians**

9-12

illus. Robert Frankenberg
McClelland and Stewart, 1973 (c.1963) 189 pages. $4.50 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Wabanaki Indian
Setting: Wilderness, Maritimes
Time: Long ago

This is a collection of nineteen short stories about how Glooscap created the Indians and made the animals the way they are today. Each story has a lesson on the need for kindness or unselfishness.

Boys, especially at the younger ages, tended to enjoy this book slightly more than girls, but even those who gave it less than top rating were positive about it, and no one really disliked it. These traditional stories can help other Canadian children better understand the myths and ancient religion of the Wabanaki people.

Read with enthusiasm by boys and girls aged 9 to 12.

Hunt, John R. **The Search**

11-14 Macmillan, 1978 123 pages. $2.30 paper

★ *Type of Story*: Growing Up/Mystery
▲ *Setting*: Wilderness, Temagami, Northern Ontario
Time: Present

Ricky Bristol can't locate his father when he arrives in Temagami to spend the summer on a geological survey party. Despite the danger he is determined to solve the mystery of his father's whereabouts and enlists the help of Ojibwa friends.

Readers said they could relate to this book because of the feelings and problems of the hero, and they found his experiences very exciting. As well as enjoying the adventure they learned more about the countryside, the modern life of the Indians, and contemporary problems. A subplot involves Ricky's relationship with his divorced parents.

An exciting easy-to-read mystery for 11 to 14 year olds, and many older and younger readers who like that sort of story.

Ireland, Robert J. **Ernie**

12-14+ Macmillan, 1978 124 pages. $2.30 paper

★ *Type of Story*: Growing Up
▲ *Setting*: Small city, somewhere in Canada
Time: Present

Nothing is going right in Ernie's life: he has fights with his parents, his football coach, his friends. Almost overwhelmed by pressures, he blames everyone else until a near-tragedy makes him realize that he alone is accountable for his actions.

Written from the viewpoint of a confused young man, this story struck a sympathetic chord with both boys and girls. They understood his feelings, and with the hero came to understand how to handle them in a responsible way. It is easy to read, but the story line is quite mature and younger children did not respond to it in the sympathetic way the more mature readers did. While not explicitly "Canadian", it evokes the flavour of a small Canadian town, its institutions and attitudes, and readers felt at home with it.

For mature readers age 12 to 14 and up.

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"I sort of have the same problems with my grandmother, maybe something like that might get us closer together." Reader #419, 14 year old girl.

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"Teenagers would just put it back and walk off 'cause they like scarier stuff." Reader #958, 5 year old boy.

James, Janet Craig **Peppy Baker**

11-14+ Macmillan, 1978 135 pages. $2.30 paper

girls *Type of Story*: Growing Up

★ *Setting*: Urban and rural, Toronto and Lake Eire area, Ontario

▲ *Time*: Present

Because of a violent outburst, fifteen-year-old Peppy Baker goes to Family Court, from which she is sent to work at a summer camp for rich girls. There she learns to see life in a new light.

Although the girls found this book tolerably good (the boys rejected it entirely), they were not enthusiastic about it. They regarded it as an interesting look at a girl's problems but unlike many of the books of this sort did not personally identify with them.

Easy reading for girls 11 to 14 or older.

Korman, Gordon **Go Jump in the Pool!**

9-13 illus. Lea Daniel

★ Scholastic-TAB, 1979 185 pages. $1.75 paper

▲ *Type of Story*: Adventure/Humour

Setting: Small town, Ontario

Time: Present

The boys at Macdonald Hall Boys' School, led by Bruno and Boots, decide to raise the $25,000 needed to give the school a pool and make it competitive with a rival school. Their unorthodox and imaginative money-raising schemes don't yield enough money until they risk it on the stock market.

Although not quite as popular as the other Macdonald Hall adventures, many readers found this a funny, even hilarious book that was easy to read and hard to put down. It is farfetched in places, and the Headmaster and other adults are the butt of pranks. All of the characterizations are shallow, and the girls mindlessly work for the boys' benefit. But overall, it is good humoured and lacking in malice. The fourteen-year-old author knew his audience well and wrote a book with high appeal to this age.

A funny book for 9 to 13 year olds.

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"The writer wrote it in a way that you could understand him/her." Reader #201, 10 year old boy.

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"If you can listen to the story and see the pictures it's sort of like TV." Reader #405, 6 year old girl.

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Q. What do you like to read most? A. "Books of kids in trouble and kids growing up, or books just about kids, period." Reader #580, 10 year old girl.

Layton, Aviva **The Magic Stones**

6-8
★
illus. Barbara Klunder
Magook Publishers, 1977 unpaged. $6.95 cloth

Type of Story: Fantasy
Setting: Village
Time: Long ago

An odd little boy named David, living in a village in a long-ago time, discovers the magic of the creation of music and how it can unite the world.

Readers found this quite a nice fantasy. They liked the illustrations and were rather restrained, but positive, about the book. Only the oldest readers grasped the significance of how the music was created or the moral that music can unite. It could interest older readers who appreciate less demanding stories, especially if they like music.

For children ages 6 to 8, or older.

Logie, Ray **The Houseless Mouse**

5-7
▲
illus. Catharine MacKenzie
Fforbez, 1977 32 pages. $.99 paper

Type of Story: Animal Fantasy
Setting: A succession of houses
Time: Any time

This is the story of a mouse named Melvyn Nibble, Esquire, and his constant search for the perfect house.

The pleasing book design and detailed fine-line drawings definitely added to the appeal of, but could not completely rescue, this somewhat rambling tale. While the readers "laughed sometimes", they often found the many little asides with which the story abounds confusing and distracting. Only the younger children seemed intrigued by the habits and fortunes of mice.

Best liked when read in a "chatty" style to children aged 5 to 7.

Mackay, Claire **Mini-Bike Racer**

9-12
★
▲
illus. Merle Smith
Scholastic-TAB, 1975 119 pages. $1.50 paper

Type of Story: Adventure
Setting: Small prairie town and surrounding area
Time: Present

Three young mini-bike racers enjoy an exciting adventure when one of them stumbles upon the hideout of an escaped convict.

Boys and girls who like adventure stories found this very easy to read and fast moving. It fails to have the strong impact on the readers that *Mini-Bike Hero* had and readers, especially those who like substance, did not relate to it in at all the same way.

For readers 9 to 12, or older, who like easy adventure stories.

Major, Kevin **Hold Fast**

12-14+ Clarke, Irwin, 1978 170 pages. $6.95 paper

★ *Type of Story*: Growing Up
● *Setting*: Small towns and remote cabin, Newfoundland
Time: Present

After Michael's parents' sudden death, he is sent to live with an aunt and uncle in another city. Unable to cope with all of the changes, he and his cousin decide to run away.

Both boys and girls (but especially boys) had a quiet appreciation of this book which spoke to them sensitively of a person their own age dealing with grief and growing up at the same time. The stream-of-consciousness style and the use of Newfoundland dialect helped the readers to understand both the situation and the special Newfoundland setting. Although some younger children could read it they did not relate to the story as well as more mature children, and some found the language offensive.

A moving story for 12 to 14 year olds, or older.

McDougall, Marina Mezey **The Little Rooster's Diamond Penny**

6-9 ▲ illus. Yüksel Hassan
Kids Can Press, 1978 unpaged. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Hungarian
Setting: Rural, Hungary
Time: Long ago

This Hungarian folktale is presented in both English and Hungarian with black and white illustrations linking the two texts. It tells how a rooster with a magic gizzard outwits the greedy Sultan and obtains more than enough wealth for the rooster and his mistress to live happily ever after.

The general reaction to this book was a fairly absorbed acceptance. Most children rather liked the illustrations but would have preferred colour to have been used more liberally. But while they enjoyed the magic in the story, they missed its moral. The many new and unusual words posed problems for the younger readers, but they enjoyed the story nonetheless.

More successful than most folktales, this appeals to children 6 to 9.

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"It had a lot of true facts and a lot of not true facts." Reader #914, 6 year old girl.

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"I found it a bit far fetched even for a legend." Reader #564, 11 year old girl.

Millard, Nicky **Flaming Star**

9-12
★
▲

illus. I. Merle Smith
Scholastic-TAB, 1979 119 pages. $1.50 paper

Type of Story: Animal
Setting: Rural, England and Ireland
Time: Present

Jago, an orphaned gypsy boy, goes to work at a racing stable somewhere in England where he forms a special friendship with a horse named Flaming Star. A disaster separates the friends and many exciting adventures befall the horse before the story's happy ending.

The friendship between the gypsy boy and the horse appealed to the readers, and they were caught up in the excitement of hardships endured. The story is fast paced and easily read, and readers had no problems with the unfamiliar setting. The illustrations gave particular enjoyment.

For both boys and girls between the ages of 9 and 12.

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"It looks nice. The orange colour is cheery." Reader #756, 7 year old boy.

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"[I like to read] anything but romance YUCH." Reader #24, 13 year old boy.

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Mole, Elsie Hadden **Norman's Thankful Book**

5-7
★

illus. by the author
Highway, 1977 24 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: A school classroom
Time: Present

It is almost Thanksgiving, and Miss Awkincloss wants her class to discuss things for which they are thankful. Tongue-tied at first, Norman contributes a nonsensical torrent of things for which he might be thankful, keeping the class entertained royally.

The children seemed to have some sympathy for the silly disruptive behavior of a class clown, especially as he got away with it. Other than that, they were rather non- committal about the story, finding it at best and at worst rather silly.

Harmless and mindless for 5 to 7 year olds.

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"Didn't enjoy it much because my mum made me read it." Reader #352, 11 year old boy.

Munsch, Robert N. **The Dark**

4-7 illus. Sami Suomalainen
Annick, 1979 30 pages. $6.95 cloth

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: A child's home
Time: Present

A blob of dark grows and grows, eating up all the shadows it can find, until Jule Ann finds a way to trap the dark and dispose of it so it can never come back.

Children found this quite funny, particularly when they knew what the dark really was. Those who were not comfortable with dark weren't so sure, and found the illustrations just a bit scary. They did not wholly relate to the story as a rule. A few of the older children could read it themselves, but it is most successful as a read-aloud.

For children age 4 to 7.

Newfeld, Frank **Simon and the Golden Sword**

6-9 illus. by the author
Oxford, 1976 unpaged. Out of print

Type of Story: Folklore
Setting: An ancient kingdom
Time: Long ago

Simon and his two brothers search for the "Sword of Light" which will give the possessor good fortune for life in this reworking of an old fairy tale line.

Children who could enjoy a fantasy-fairy tale rated this very highly. The illustrations, the bright colours, and the nice quality paper especially appealed to them. It would have to be read aloud to most six and seven-year-olds and could also probably be enjoyed by some younger children.

For children 6 to 9, or even older readers who enjoy fairy tales.

Obed, Ellen Bryan **Borrowed Black**

7-9 illus. Hope Yandell
Breakwater, 1979 unpaged. $8.95 cloth

Type of Story: Poetry/Folklore
Setting: Coastal, Labrador
Time: Long ago

This Labrador legend tells, in verse, how the moon came to have a pattern on it and the sea came to sparkle.

The rather frightening illustrations and the humourous story were both well enjoyed; it is unusual to have such wide acceptance of a poetry book by children. Parents also liked it very much. The only drawback to the book is the script printing: children under eight found it just too difficult to decipher.

For children 7 to 9; the younger ones will need help to read it.

Pasternak, Carol and Sutterfield, Allen **Stone Soup**

5-10

illus. Hedy Campbell
Women's Educational Press, 1974 unpaged. $3.95 paper

Type of Story: Lifestyle/Multiculturalism
Setting: Urban
Time: Present

This modern version of a classic tale tells how the children of various ethnic backgrounds all contribute something of their own to the soup pot and learn how to enjoy each other.

Readers found this generally more instructive than enjoyable, and it is probably at its best when used for family or classroom discussion. It portrays a cultural mosaic very common to our inner cities particularly, and familiar to many children. The foreign words are explained in a glossary. Younger children will certainly need to have it read to them.

For children aged 5 to 10.

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"It was OK but the good guys always win in those kinds of books." Reader #24, 12 year old boy.

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Powell, Dorothy M. **Captives of Cauldron Cave**

10-13

illus. Nancy Lou Reynolds
Scholastic-TAB, 1977 153 pages. $1.50 paper

Type of Story: Animal/Adventure
Setting: Wilderness, Vancouver Island, British Columbia
Time: Present

This is a story of the fight for survival of a young Great Dane, Saladin, and three pups who become trapped in caves in a mountainous area, and of the relationships between the humans who try to rescue them.

Most readers would concur with the reviewer who said, "it was exciting in most parts but in some parts it dragged", mainly, though, it was considered an easily read, short, exciting story. The human characters' personal problems were a somewhat contrived intrusion into basically a dog story and were ignored by the age range who read the book. This element might, however, extend the appeal to older readers who could enjoy a not-too-demanding story. The story also has some interesting information on the sport of caving.

For boys and girls age 10 to 13 or older.

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"It looks like an artist hand-painted the pictures." Reader #548, 11 year old girl.

Richard, Maurice **The Golden-haired Teddy Bear**

4-7 illus. by the author
Highway, 1975 17 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Animal Fantasy
Setting: Kingdom of Wool
Time: Any time

The Kingdom of Wool has a lot of problems – sheep have grown giraffe legs, there are no warm clothes, Teddy's hair is falling out, a crocodile is lost – but Teddy and Roseta, with some help from a wizard, find solutions.

This is a read-aloud story for the very young, rather complicated in a silly sort of way. Readers were intrigued by some of the passages, especially the wizard's chants, but in spite of some fairly high ratings were not especially enthusiastic. Most parents weren't either.

A read-aloud for children 4 to 7.

Rising, Trudy L. **Snails, Slugs, Spiders and Bugs . . . A Child's Guide to Nature**

3-9
★ illus. Kathryn De Vos Miller
Magook Publishers, 1977 32 pages. $6.95 cloth

Type of Book: Science Picture Book

The animals, their habits, and their habitats of Central North America are beautifully illustrated in full colour, and keys to each page identify the animals, insects, and plants. Each page has a brief caption, in verse.

Our readers enjoyed the detailed illustrations throughout; the "poem" paled to insignificance in their enjoyment. Parents found it a good discussion tool for the three to six-year-olds and felt that it would be a good reference book for the older child as well. The six- to nine-year-olds found it very easy to read. It would be useful in the classroom in the study of ecosystems.

A nature picture book for 3 to 9 year olds.

Rivkin, Ann **Mystery of Disaster Island**

10-13 illus. Affie Mohammed
★ Scholastic-TAB, 1979 (c.1975) 144 pages $1.50 paper

▲ *Type of Story*: Mystery
Setting: Small coastal island, British Columbia
Time: Present

When his family is forced to move to the milder climate of the B.C. coast, John is resentful and unhappy. But a challenge is presented by mysterious events which threaten the family's purchase of a tourist lodge and island. John and his sister Linda are drawn into danger before they can solve the mystery.

Readers enjoyed the suspense of a well-sustained plot which is enhanced by the use of a good vocabulary and well-developed family relationships; on the whole, while not great literature, it is a good read.

For boys and girls 10 to 13 who like mysteries; many even older or younger good readers could also enjoy it.

Rivkin, Ann **The Time to Choose**

11-14+ girls

illus. Affie Mohammed
Scholastic-TAB, 1976 (c.1974) 161 pages. $1.50 paper

★ *Type of Story*: Growing Up/Acting
▲ *Setting*: Small towns and villages throughout British Columbia
Time: 1970's

A missed performance means young actress Cindy Adams loses a chance to tour with the same prestigious theatre company that her domineering boyfriend is hired by. Working instead with a shoe-string company performing for children in remote areas, she comes to some decisions on what is important to her.

This was judged a passably good story in a totally unattractive cover. It is simple to read and well within the capacity of pre-teens, but they did not really identify with the adult decisions about the course of her life that the heroine had to make. Most of the girls found it tolerably good, if not first rate, and a few of the older boys found it tolerable, but like the older girls, they did not find it challenging. It could well appeal to older teenagers who appreciate an easy-to-read book, especially if they also are interested in acting. It handles the characters, events, and problems very realistically.

For girls 11 to 14 or older and some boys who are interested in acting or in stories about being independent.

Rokeby-Thomas, Anna E. **Ningiyuk's Igloo World**

10-12

illus. James N. Howard
Moodie Press, 1972 94 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Native People: Inuit/Lifestyle
Setting: Arctic wilderness
Time: Recent past

Ten-year old Ningiyuk's happiness is shattered when she finds she is adopted. She must come to terms with this knowledge and also the conflicts between the traditional beliefs and those taught by the Christian missionaries.

Readers readily identified with the feeling of a child their own age and felt great sympathy for her. They felt warmly toward her, her family, and toward Inuit lifestyle. They apparently did not react to the religious proselytizing which may seem to adults to suggest rather too unequivocally that human virtue is strongly dependent on conversion to Christian beliefs and values. That notwithstanding, and in spite of being visually unattractive, it was greatly enjoyed.

For readers 10 to 12.

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"This book is repetitive, badly written, overfactual and boring." Reader #76, 11 year old girl.

Salsberg, Barbara **Up in Bubbles**

5-8 illus. by the author
Annick, 1979 47 pages. $6.95 cloth

Type of Story: Fantasy
Setting: A child's home and on a fantasy trip
Time: Present

A lonely, overworked little girl escapes from the drudgery of her life by blowing up some bubble gum found on the ground and flying off in the bubble. Her mean, unhappy father flies off after her and discovers how joyful life can be.

Although they felt it attractive in appearance, no one showed great enthusiasm for this book. Its limited appeal lay in the illustrations of the bubble gum flight which readers thought would be great fun. Unfortunately, they grasped neither the underlying story of a lonely little girl and her unhappy father, nor the solution to their problem. The disjointed text seems written as an accompaniment to the illustrations, but neither conveys the thread of the story to the children well. Perhaps its message is intended for adults anyway. It would have to be read aloud to all except the oldest.

For children aged 5 to 8.

Schaffer, Marion **I Love My Plant!/J'aime ma plante!**

4-8 illus. Kathy Vanderlinden
▲ Kids Can Press, 1979 unpaged. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Science Picture Book
Setting: The home
Time: Present

A young boy learns from his older sister how to care for his plant. The text is in English and French.

The book inspired little real enthusiasm although younger readers especially felt they had indeed learned plant care. The illustrations were well liked but the "story" was insignificant. When encouraged by parents, the French Immersion children found they could handle the French text too, but as the English is complete, many readers felt no inclination to do so.

A how-to-care-for plants book for 4 to 8 year olds.

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"There is no such person as the sun. It's just a plain ordinary big planet on fire and never stops." Reader #669, 6 year old boy.

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"Pictures don't let your imagination run free. They are what someone else thinks of the person." Reader #24, 12 year old boy.

Sherwood, Roland H. **Maritime Mysteries: Haunting Tales From Atlantic Canada**

11-14

★

▲

Lancelot Press, 1976 112 pages. $3.50 paper

Type of Story: Folklore
Setting: Various locations in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island
Time: 1800's

This is a collection of nineteen tales based on supernatural occurrences in the Maritime provinces.

Readers expressed a quiet appreciation of these stories, some of them quite scary and interesting, but others rather less so, but all told in a matter-of-fact way. Almost no one objected to them strongly and because they bring alive the history and superstition of the Maritimes could be useful in early High School classes where a combination of high interest and readability is an asset.

For readers 11 to 14, or older, especially if they have an interest in the supernatural.

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"I like exciting and funny books and this is more just talking." Reader #702, 10 year old girl.

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"The pictures are better than the normal Eskimo pictures." Reader #83, 11 year old girl.

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Shipley, Nan **The Blonde Voyageur**

12-14 + girls

Burns & MacEachern, 1971 122 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Historical Adventure
Setting: Wilderness, Fort Churchill to Lake Winnipeg, Manitoba
Time: 1805-8

Josephine Ness, disguised as a boy, stows away on a Hudson Bay vessel bound for Fort Churchill, determined to find her boyfriend who is a clerk with the Hudson Bay Company. For two years she travels as a servant of one of the fur traders across the Manitoba wilderness (her disguise lapses only briefly and she gives birth to a child) until she accomplishes her mission.

Like much historical fiction, this was either wholly enjoyed or not read past the first few pages. The mature readers among the girls found it a fine book and enjoyed it immensely, as did a rare older boy. The love affair is quite antiseptic. Part of the story is based on an event recorded in Alexander Heney's journals, and that, plus a good map, give authenticity to the story. The life of the fur traders, their relationships with the Indians, and the arduousness of life in the years just before the arrival of the Selkirk settlers are well documented.

Good reading for mature readers of historical fiction, girls particularly.

Singer, Yvonne **Little-Miss-Yes-Miss**

6-7 illus. Angela Wood
▲ Kids Can Press, 1976 unpaged. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Lifestyle/Multiculturalism
Setting: Rural and urban, Jamaica and Toronto
Time: Present

When Cicely leaves Jamaica to join her parents in Toronto she finds her new surroundings strange and frightening, and both she and her new acquaintances have to learn to understand each other.

"I know how she feels" sums up the children's reactions to Cicely's loneliness after she moved, and her feeling of not fitting in. The unusual title and black and white illustrations did little to attract children to the book, and since it is too difficult for children to read it themselves at the age where it has the greatest impact, it is suggested as a read-aloud cum discussion book. The story suggests a constructive, if somewhat simplistic, solution to the problem of acceptance.

Good for discussions on feeling strange, or on our multicultural make-up, for 6 and 7 year olds.

Sivers, Brenda **The Snailman**

9-12 illus. Shirley Hughes
● Little, Brown, 1978 118 pages. $8.50 cloth

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: Small village, England
Time: Present

Young Tim is lonely after his family moves from London to a small English village where the children are teases and bullies. For companionship, he turns to another outcast like himself, the crippled and reclusive "Snailman."

Despite an unappealing title and unattractive cover, readers judged this a quite acceptable story, touching in places and quite exciting too. The message that friendship and acceptance are possible even in the face of cruel bullying is well conveyed.

Although the younger children may find the book somewhat difficult to read, it is enjoyed by 9 to 12 year olds.

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"I did not understand it so I can not explain what it is about." Reader #892, 10 year old girl.

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"It contained too much foreshadowing ... because of this the book is too easy to predict." Reader #219, 15 year old girl.

Straiton, Bill **Selections from the Tiger Witch . . . and the Winkle Pickers**

4-9
▲

illus. Len Norris
Scholastic-TAB, 1976 (c.1963) unpaged. $1.75 paper

Type of Book: Poetry/Humour

Seventeen poems, some quite short, are illustrated by detailed line drawings.

Children found both the poems and the drawings very, very funny. As with most poetry, having it read aloud made it much more fun. Younger children especially liked having the verses re-read, learning the shorter ones by heart, and sharing the pictures with friends. Parents enjoyed it along with the children.

Great fun to read aloud with children aged 4 to 9.

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"You can't trust hardly anyone when big money is involved." Reader #437, 11 year old boy.

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"I didn't like anything about this book. Tell the ladies no one else will like it either, it's so silly." Reader #621, 6 year old girl.

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Stren, Patti **Sloan & Philamina, or How to Make Friends with your Lunch**

6-10
★

illus. by the author
E.P. Dutton, 1979 unpaged. $8.95 cloth

Type of Story: Animal Fantasy/Humour
Setting: An anteater's house
Time: Any time

Anteater Sloan is captivated by Philamina ant and her elephant jokes, so instead of eating her, he invites her to move in with him. Despite near catastrophe, their relationship endures and they succeed in uniting both their families.

Most of the readers credited their enjoyment to the abundant cartoon-like line drawing (which are full of visual jokes), but the appeal of the coy humour was not universal. Some others found the elephant jokes funny but the story itself was not considered of great importance. All could read it themselves except for the youngest, for whom it was sufficient to happily peruse the illustrations. Girls seemed to like it slightly better than boys, but the difference was not great.

Nonsensical fun for children 6 to 10.

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"I didn't really read too much but I liked this book – wasn't the worst book I've read." Reader #806, 9 year old boy.

Tap, Monica **Mr. Brown and His Magic Mustache**

4-6
★
illus. Martha Jablonski-Jones
Tree Frog Press, 1979 unpaged. $4.95 cloth

▲
Type of Story: Fantasy
Setting: Urban
Time: Present

Mr. Tap only has to wiggle his magic mustache and poof! anything he is mad at disappears.

This little fantasy, magic with a moral, appealed to young children's sense of fun. They found the story quite entertaining. The cartoon-like illustrations in colour and black and white were very popular. Parents liked it especially well and said they hoped to see more from this author, who was in Grade 7 when she wrote it. The book is poorly bound and does not to stand up well to continued usage.

A highly entertaining read-along for children 4 to 6.

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"Pictures don't make me want to read books because I don't read pictures." Reader #11, 11 year old boy.

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"I like reading about Indians." Reader #779, 7 year old boy.

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Tierney, Frank M. **Silly Sally and the Little Pumpkin**

3-7
illus. Wendy Irvine
Borealis, 1978 20 pages. $4.95 paper

Type of Story: Fantasy
Setting: A child's home and neighbourhood
Time: Present

An exciting turn of events occurs when Sally forgets her Halloween candy in order to rescue a pumpkin.

Delightful illustrations, including one for the children to colour, were appreciated by the children. They also liked it because it is a very happy story about Halloween. It is simple for young readers, and enjoyable as a read-aloud book.

For boys and girls aged 3 to 7.

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"I did not like this book!!! The characters swore, the descriptions were sickening and the story makes life look like a JUNKYARD!" Reader #339, 11 year old girl.

Toye, William **The Loon's Necklace**

6-9 illus. Elizabeth Cleaver
Oxford, 1977 unpaged. $5.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Tsimshian Indian/Art Book
Setting: Mountainous woodlands, interior British Columbia
Time: Long ago

This is a retelling of the legend of how the loon came to have the white collar around his neck and the markings on his back, and why his cry is sometimes sad and lonely and sometimes joyful.

Like most of the Toye-Cleaver books, this is one which adults find commendable without great child appeal. Readers did seem to recognize the "real art" of the book, but many did not fully understand the legend and were only mildly attracted to it. This book lends itself to reading aloud to younger children, and will be read with some interest by eight- and nine-year-olds who can read it and understand it themselves. Its simple, matter-of-fact style and "young" look diminish its appeal to the older reader who demands challenge.

Best suited to 6 to 9 year olds.

Toye, William **The Mountain Goats of Temlaham**

5-9 illus. Elizabeth Cleaver
★ Oxford, 1969 unpaged. $4.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Tsimshian Indian/Art Book
Setting: Mountainous coastal British Columbia
Time: Long ago

This is a dramatic retelling, with colourful collage illustration, of the West Coast Indian legend of the tribe who forgot the old law of taking only as much meat as they need to survive and are punished accordingly by the goats.

Those readers who liked the story liked it very much, and everyone found the illustrations especially attractive. It was enjoyed highly by a broad age range: the younger ones, five and six, who had it read to them, and the older ones who were not offended by a simple short story. The message of kindness to animals was clearly understood, but the cruelty to the goats disturbed some children and accounted for most of the lower ratings.

An impressive legend for 5 to 9 year olds.

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"Each time I tried to read it, it put me to sleep." Reader #513, 14 year old boy.

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"Well it was good until the end. I thought there was more, then I turned the page and there wasn't." Reader #756, 7 year old boy.

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"Why is the title of the book words so that you can't read it?" Reader #606, 7 year old girl.

Trim, Marj **Nivek & Nala from Sirch**

7-9 illus. Ludo Schmidt-Fajlik
★ Hoot Publications, 1976 unpaged. $8.50 cloth

Type of Story: Science Fiction
Setting: A Canadian city, planet Earth
Time: Present

A spaceship runs out of fuel and is forced to land on Earth. Nivek and Nala, the spacemen, have to go looking for more fuel.

Beginning readers liked this little bit of "science fiction". Its hard cover and rather "grown up" appearance gives the impression of a real book, while its abundant illustration carried along those who might have difficulty with the simple direct sentences. Definitely not a book that they enjoyed reading aloud, parents found the style inelegant and the denouement rather silly. The children found it funny, and less confident readers were proud of having read the story themselves.

For beginning readers age 7 to 9, or perhaps even older.

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"It's the same old story — a man rescues a princess and they get married." Reader #500, 10 year old boy.

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Weir, Joan Sherman **Exile at the Rocking Seven**

11-14 Macmillan, 1977 145 pages. $2.30 paper
★ *Type of Story*: Growing Up/Sports/Ranching
▲ *Setting*: Ranch, British Columbia
Time: Present

Seventeen-year-old Danny, who lives in Winnipeg, is sent against his will to spend the summer on a B.C. ranch. His initial truculence finally wears off and he takes part in a jousting competition.

The hero's flawed character made him real and understandable to the readers, and they enjoyed the fast action, interesting happenings, and the considerable amount of humour in the story. The picture of ranch life and of the social conditions in the community and, especially, the excitement of the jousting competition were much appreciated.

Exciting, instructive, and fun for readers 11 to 14, or older.

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"It seemed like a book of facts instead of one for enjoyment." Reader #542, 12 year old girl.

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"The story may be short but the words create a vivid picture." Reader #175, 12 year old girl.

Weir, Joan Sherman **Three-Day Challenge**

10-14+ illus. Alan Daniel
★ Scholastic-TAB, 1976 (c.1975) 190 pages. $1.50 paper

▲ *Type of Story*: Sports
Setting: Ranch, British Columbia and London, Ontario
Time: Present

Feeling shy and uncertain, eighteen-year-old Janey travels from her B.C. ranch home to try out for the Canadian Equestrian Team in London, Ontario. As well as the usual pressures of a major competition she must also handle her worries about the financial situation at home and being able to meet the social demands that team membership will entail.

All except avid haters of horse stories found this an absorbing and realistic account of the dedication required by this demanding sport. While fairly long for young readers it is not difficult, and has a story line mature enough for older readers who like the genre.

For sports or horse-story fans aged 10 to 14, or older.

Williams, Bert **Sword of Egypt**

11-12 illus. Laszlo Gal
★ Scholastic-TAB, 1977 (c.1976) 129 pages. $1.50 paper

▲ *Type of Story*: Historical/Adventure
Setting: Egypt
Time: Ancient times

When Aahmes' father is killed on the spot for a treasonous act and his brother is jailed, Aahmes determines to see the Pharoah himself in order to restore the family honour.

"A good read" was provided those who like an adventure set against a historical background – children described it as good, exciting, a well-told and easy-to-read story. In addition, most readers absorbed almost unawares a great deal of cultural information about ancient Egypt. While not difficult, the foreign setting and rather sad beginning deterred some of the younger readers.

For those aged 11 or 12, or older, who like adventure stories.

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"Old people can be nice – I guess they were little a long time ago." Reader #621, 4 year old girl.

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"I dislike novels about horses." Reader #128, 11 year old boy.

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"It's hard to solve a mystery when you are so young." Reader #787, 8 year old boy.

Zander, Hans **The Harmonica Man**

5-8
▲

illus. by the author
Scholastic-TAB, 1976 unpaged. $1.95 paper

Type of Story: Picture Book
Setting: Small town, rural
Time: Present

A lonely boy who is afraid of many things loses his fears when he meets and makes friends with a man who plays the harmonica. The man teaches the boy to play, and when the muscian leaves, the boy discovers he spreads happiness with his music just as the harmonica man did.

Children enjoyed the happy spirited drawings and understood the idea of friendship and music bringing happiness – they found it a pleasant story with a nice ending. Only the oldest could read it for themselves, but parents enjoyed reading it aloud. Some adults find the story line meagre.

For boys and girls aged 5 to 8.

GROUP IV

Approximately 55% to 65% of the readers in the indicated age ranges rated these books highly. Many of the books for young readers that appear here and in Group V were judged only mediocre. Those for older readers tend to reflect individual or specialized tastes and, while some were highly enjoyed, their appeal was narrow.

The quotes from children that are interspersed among the reviews illustrate some of the trends in children's opinions. Please note that they do not refer specifically to the books listed on the same page.

For an explanation of the marginal symbols and of the evaluation process, see the Explanatory Notes (pp. 1-4).

Alderson, Sue Ann **The Adventures of Prince Paul**

5-7 illus. Jane Wolsak
Fforbez, 1977 31 pages. $.99 paper

Type of Story: Fairy Tale
Setting: Imaginary kingdom
Time: Any time

Prince Paul sets out alone to seek adventure and is helped in succession by an eagle, a turtle, and a dragon when he is in trouble. They subsequently become his lifelong friends.

The story was only moderately well liked as a read-aloud book for younger children or as a short and easy story for beginning readers. It was not particularly favoured by parents, who found it colourless.

A rather bland fairy tale for children 5 to 7.

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"It seems hard to imagine but if you have an imagination maybe you can imagine it." Reader #667, 11 year old girl.

Alderson, Sue Ann **Bonnie McSmithers Is at It Again!**

5-7 illus. Fiona Garrick
Tree Frog Press, 1979 45 pages. $4.95 paper $7.95 cloth

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: A child's home
Time: Present

Bonnie McSmithers *is* at it again, trying to do all sorts of creative things and independently refusing her mother's help. She finally accepts it, and cooperation becomes the key to a happy ending.

Many children identified with a girl who was "a little bit right and a little bit wrong in everything", but they generally found this story a little less believable than the first in the series; the very young who had recognized themselves in *Bonnie McSmithers You're Driving Me Dithers* didn't relate to the things she did in this book. Even the older ones did not seem to understand her need to do things independently, and without this identification the story is rather flat.

Best for children aged 5 to 7, probably as a read-aloud.

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"I like the books about early man and dinosaurs and stuff. Why don't you get some good ghost stories for me to read too?" Reader #958, 5 year old boy.

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"[I learned] how to care for a horse. Phooey. To become a lawyer or doctor you don't need to take care of a horse." Reader #41, 13 year old girl.

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Alderson, Sue Ann **Hurry Up, Bonnie!**

4-7 illus. Fiona Garrick
Tree Frog Press, 1977 43 pages. $4.95 paper $7.95 cloth

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: Urban neighbourhood
Time: Present

In this third encounter with Bonnie McSmithers, Bonnie's mother has to keep urging her along as they walk to buy the paper, but the situation is reversed when Mother wants to read and Bonnie wants to get to the park. With a spirit of cooperation, all ends well.

Both parents and children recognized this true-to-life situation, and, although they were not wildly enthusiastic, found it familiar and amusing. Of the three Bonnie books, this one irritated parents the least.

Best as a read-aloud for children 4 to 7.

Allan, Ted **Willie the Squowse**

8-12 illus. Quentin Blake
McClelland and Stewart, 1977 57 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Humour/Animal Fantasy
Setting: Urban, England
Time: Present

Willie, the "squowse" (half squirrel, half mouse) makes his home in the common wall between two houses. One house is occupied by an elderly couple who save 10-Pound notes in a crack in the wall and the other house by a poor and squalid family. Amusing consequences ensue when Willie uses the money to plug the holes on the side of the poor family.

Children were only mildly amused by this short and easily read story, but the cartoon-style drawings were entertaining. The flavour of the book is somewhat British, and may account for the modestly enthusiastic ratings. Since parents seemed to enjoy it more than the children it might well be more successful as a read-aloud book.

For readers 8 to 12, or to be read to younger children.

Allinson, Beverley, O'Kelly, Barbara and Lawrence, Judith **The Dog Power Tower**

5-8 illus. Alan Daniel
Methuen, 1977 unpaged. $3.95 paper

Type of Story: Fantasy
Setting: Research station and remote lakes and forest
Time: Present

Casey and Finnegan and other *Mr. Dressup* characters get involved with an experiment to use dog power to solve the energy crisis.

While children who were fond of Mr. Dressup's TV programme were attracted to the book, they found they often needed parents' help in order to understand the plays on words. Because the style of writing and vocabulary are complicated, the book presents an ideal opportunity for parents to introduce children to new words and concepts by using a medium most younger children know and love. Both children and parents particularly liked the illustrations. The caricatures of some Very Important People amused the adults.

A read-along book for children 5 to 8.

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"[The book looks as] if you were 7 – 8 and didn't know how to read." Reader #25, 9 year old girl.

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"I like to read mystery stories because I like to unscramble the clues to get the answer." Reader #757, 6 year old boy.

Allison, Rosemary **The Green Harpy at the Corner Store**

5-8 illus. Claire Watson Garcia
Kids Can Press, 1976 unpaged. $3.50 paper

Type of Story: Fantasy
Setting: Urban, Toronto, Ontario
Time: Present

A mythical bird from Greece disrupts the order of family life when it stops over because of an injured wing.

Readers found this a rather strange book whose chief redeeming feature was the intriguing illustration and Toronto setting. But while it wasn't very popular, it was not terribly unpopular either. Only the older children could read it themselves.

For children 5 to 8.

Andersen, Doris I. **Blood Brothers**

10-13 Macmillan, 1967 136 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Historical: Settlement/Native Peoples
Setting: Rural wilderness, Minnesota and Bella Coola, British Columbia
Time: 1890's

Eleven-year-old Nils Teirvik, who has immigrated to British Columbia from Minnesota, has a series of adventures in his new land. Through his new friend Qwata he learns something of Indian life.

Many readers are not predisposed to books of this genre, but except for those, the story got a warm reaction. It was described as interesting, well written, and adventurous and seemed especially acceptable to boys. It contains information of Indian customs and Norwegian settlements in B.C.

Interesting historical fiction for readers 10 to 13.

Bergelt, Diana **Big Max III – Adventure at the Ranch**

7-8 Borealis, 1977 57 pages. $3.95 paper

Type of Story: Adventure/Animal
Setting: Ranch, Cariboo, British Columbia
Time: Present

This is the third book in a series about Big Max, a German Shepherd dog, and his adventures with his family. The family (Dad, Mother, John, and John's friend Billy) spend a weekend on a ranch in the Cariboo.

A very small group of children found the story exciting and informative. They enjoyed the animal adventure and all the details of ranching. Like the others in the series, this book has an odd preoccupation with the use of capitals; this, and the short simple sentences and repetitive style became an annoyance to all but the youngest readers. There are no illustrations to provide relief.

For readers 7 or 8 who like animal or cowboy stories.

Berton, Pierre **The Golden Trail**

12-14 illus. Alan Daniel
Macmillan, 1974 110 pages. $5.95 cloth $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Historical Non-Fiction: Gold Rush
Setting: Northern frontier, Klondike area, Yukon
Time: 1896-9

Gold discoveries in the Eldorado-Bonanza creeks launched a gold rush that lasted until news of strikes in Alaska spelled the end of this incredible period. This factual rendering of the Klondike Gold Rush is brought to life by the use of eyewitness accounts from newspaper reports, letters, and private journals.

Some readers in grades 7 and 8 were exceptionally positive about the profusion of fact presented (for a history book) in such a highly palatable form. As one reader said, "the hardships of the trail, humour, sadness, luck, life, and death were all mixed together artfully".

A must for students of Canadian history in the 12 to 14 age range, it is also enjoyed by history buffs from 11 to adult.

Bradford, Karleen **A Year for Growing**

9-14 illus. Charles Hilder
Scholastic-TAB, 1977 137 pages. $1.50 paper

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: Rural, Owen Sound, Ontario
Time: Present

Robbie, a young Montrealer, is forced to spend a year with his grandfather in rural Ontario when his parents are posted abroad. Both grandfather and grandson have to learn to appreciate and understand each other, and to accommodate their differing viewpoints on wildlife and conservation.

Girls and boys found the story and characters very realistic. They liked the action and adventure, the description of the character's feelings, and learning about fishing and wildlife.

For readers 9 to 14.

Craig, John **Who Wants to Be Alone?**

13-14 + Scholastic-TAB, 1974 (c.1972) 239 pages. $1.95 paper

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: On the road, Canada and United States
Time: 1960's and 70's

Zach is apparently the last survivor of his Agawa tribe and the book traces his search for his tribal heritage. During his odyssey he meets others who are also searching for some meaning and direction in their lives.

Although pre-teen readers could read the book, the philosophy was really beyond them. Among the young teenagers who read it, those who identified with Zach's search for an identity enjoyed it and found it well written. Others who did not take to that kind of story were not interested by it.

For mature readers 13 or 14 and older.

French, Alice **My Name is Masak**

10-12 illus. by photographs
Peguis, 1977 110 pages. $9.00 cloth $4.00 paper

Type of Story: Biography/Native Peoples: Inuit
Setting: Arctic, Baillie Island, Banks Island, Aklavik, Northwest Territories
Time: 1930-1944

The first fourteen years of the author's life are described – her early days with her family, the lonely years spent at the residential school run by the Anglican Church in Aklavik, and her reunion with her father and stepmother.

While not an exciting book, readers respected it as an authentic autobiography, and those whose taste ran to that sort of book found it interesting. It is full of information on Inuit experience, but is expressed in such an understated style that some prior knowledge of or interest in the subject seemed necessary for high enjoyment.

Readers 10 to 12 were most receptive.

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"[I like to read] stories on animals and people but I just like to read book."
Reader #807, 10 year old girl.

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"I like to read mysteries and books on how to be a detective or spy."
Reader #909, 9 year old girl.

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Harris, Christie **Mouse Woman and the Muddleheads**

10-13 illus. Douglas Tait
McClelland and Stewart, 1979 131 pages. $11.95 cloth

Type of Story: Folklore: Northwest Coast Indian
Setting: Woodlands, Coastal British Columbia
Time: Long ago

This is a further collection of legends concerning Mouse Woman, the spirit who helps young people tricked into trouble. To her, those who couldn't see that the *proper* way to do things was the *only* way were "muddleheads". These seven legends tell of muddleheads who don't observe the proper respect and ritual of the hunt, who try to marry above their station, and so forth.

The cover and illustrations were not felt to be attractive by many of the readers, but the stories were reasonably well regarded, especially among the older readers who could appreciate the meaning more. The short, humourous stories were easily read by those who enjoy Indian legends and enjoy learning more of their beliefs.

For readers 10 to 13, especially if they like legends.

Harris, Christie **Mouse Woman and the Vanished Princesses**

10-13

illus. Douglas Tait
McClelland and Stewart, 1976 155 pages. $10.95 cloth

Type of Story: Folklore: Northwest Coast Indian
Setting: Coastal British Columbia
Time: Long ago

In each of the six legends in this collection, a princess is captured by the trickery of the animal-spirit world in order to teach her or her people a lesson. Assistance and/or rescue is offered in each case by Mouse Woman, a narnauk (spirit) who is sometimes a mouse, sometimes a tiny old woman.

Of the three *Mouse Woman* collections, this one elicited the most frequent and fullest comments on the stories and the lessons they taught, and it was the least likely to be rejected out-of-hand as boring. It is also the most comprehensible to younger children, age 8 to 9, who enjoyed it but for whom it is rather difficult to read by themselves.

Appreciated by readers 10 to 13, some younger children enjoy having it read to them.

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"Indian legends usually keep you interested." Reader #769, 10 year old boy.

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Houston, James **River Runners: A Tale of Hardship and Bravery**

11-14

illus. by the author
McClelland and Stewart, 1979 142 pages. $9.95 cloth

Type of Story: Native people: Naskapi Indians/Survival
Setting: Arctic wilderness, Fort Chimo area
Time: Early 1900's

Andrew Stewart is a new apprentice clerk at a fur trading post. He is forced to adapt very quickly to the new surroundings and with his Naskapi Indian friend Pashah spends a dangerous and adventure filled winter in the Arctic wilderness.

This is one of the rare books whose cover appeal accurately predicted the book's popularity: the few whose taste runs towards stories of life in the Arctic, and who would have chosen it, liked it very well. The reality of the story perhaps made it a bit slow moving for many readers, but the evocative picture of Naskapi Indian life could make it a valuable school aid.

For readers 11 to 14 who appreciate a believable and well-written story of the Arctic.

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"Enough Indians!" Reader #735, 11 year old boy.

Kellerhals-Stewart, Heather **Cricket Christmas**

5-8 illus. Lucya Yarymowich
Borealis, 1978 26 pages. $4.95 paper

Type of Story: Animal Fantasy
Setting: Rural
Time: Any time

A peace-loving cricket named Stalkey nearly dies for his beliefs, but is rescued and inspires the other crickets to song on Christmas morning.

The story received modest approval from the children, but they missed the point of the "miracle". Nothing about the book evoked enthusiasm; even the illustrations seemed to add little to the book's appeal. Parents found it less than satisfactory in style, structure, and presentation.

A read-aloud Christmas story for 5 to 8 year olds; 7 and 8 year olds may want to re-read it or attempt it on their own.

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"It was good, it could have been a "Hardy Boy" book." Reader #550, 10 year old boy.

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Kendal, Wallis **Just Gin**

11-13 illus. Ib Ohlsson
Macmillan, 1973 159 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: Urban
Time: 1970's

This "autobiography" of a young adolescent describes her friends, her school, and the ups and downs in her life.

Reactions to the book were quite extreme. Some readers found it very funny and very true to life. Many others, especially boys, would not even read it. Adults tended to have the same reaction to it. Its attempt at stream of consciousness results in a rather unnatural and dated style.

For those age 11 to 13 with a certain sense of humour.

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"[I like to read] Playboy magazines, Hot Rod, [and] comics." Reader #630, 7 year old boy.

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"[I didn't finish the book because] it is crammed with facts, names, numbers, places and theories." Reader #24, 13 year old boy.

Kurelek, William **A Prairie Boy's Winter**

9 up

illus. by the author
Tundra, 1973 unpaged. $12.95 cloth $4.95 paper

Type of Story: Biography/Art Book
Setting: Farm, prairie
Time: 1930's

The author's own childhood is recalled by way of paintings and simply told accounts of winter activities on a prairie farm in the 'thirties.

The appearance of this art book had almost no appeal to the readers – it is too big and looks too much a picture book for them to choose to read on their own. Yet when asked to evaluate it for us many children got pleasure from it. Although they certainly did not find it exciting, they did find it very interesting and became quite involved in the activities and incidents in prairie life depicted in the paintings. The text was found easy to read, and if the readership were limited to nine- and ten-year-olds the book would lie in Group II. However, it was often considered childish by readers over ten. Those who knew or whose parents had known something of prairie life enjoyed it most. Younger children would probably enjoy having segments read aloud.

Although they would not likely select this book, it can be highly enjoyable for children aged 9 or 10, and for older people who like Kurelek's style.

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"[The book's] purpose is not to teach ... but to be fun and enjoyable. I am not saying a book can't be both educational and *fun but it is simply not the purpose of this book." Reader #755, 13 year old girl.*

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"I don't like books about girls." Reader #748, 10 year old boy.

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Leeder, Terry **The Long Sault**

9-12

illus. Deborah Drew-Brook
Dundurn, 1979 63 pages. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Historical: Early Settlement
Setting: Wilderness, Ottawa/St. Lawrence River
Time: 1660

In the spring of 1660 Dollard des Ormeaux and a small band of French and Indian warriors attempt to ambush Iroquois fur traders along the lower reaches of the Ottawa River. However, they engage some 700 war-minded Iroquois who were on their way to wipe out Montreal.

Some readers, especially boys, found this rather grim tale quite exciting – especially as it is true. Those who dislike fighting or historical stories did not like it. The addition of a map might have cleared up the confusion readers had as to where the events actually happened.

Readers 9 to 12 who like stories of historical battles found it exciting.

Leeder, Terry **Pioneer among the Mountains**

9-11

illus. Deborah Drew-Brook
Dundurn, 1979 63 pages. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Historical Adventure/Gold Rush
Setting: Wilderness frontier, Rockies, Canada West
Time: 1862

The Schubert family, including children aged two, four, and six years, endures a hazardous crossing of the Rocky Mountains enroute to the Cariboo gold fields. The story is told from the viewpoint of six-year-old Gus.

Readers found this a realistic sounding story but were otherwise restrained in their comments. Lack of a map made it difficult for them to know exactly where it happened, but in spite of that it could have some use in classroom studies: the terrain, the weather, and the difficulties of travel by pack train are described. There is quite a bit of action, and is easy reading for older children if they are not too offended by the six-year-old viewpoint.

For readers 9 to 11, or older, who like historical adventure.

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"I think the author took up most of the pages explaining too much." Reader #165, 9 year old girl.

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"I like to read war books with action." Reader #819, 9 year old boy.

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Leeder, Terry **White Forehead of the Cypress Hills**

9-12
boys

illus. Deborah Drew-Brook
Dundurn, 1979 63 pages. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Historical: Northwest Mounted Police
Setting: Prairie frontier, Southern Saskatchewan
Time: 1875-80

James Walsh of the Royal North West Mounted Police (called White Forehead because of his helmet) is charged with the responsibility of keeping law and order in a vast area of southern Saskatchewan. To do so he must gain the respect of Sitting Bull and his Sioux warriors, who have retreated to the safety of Canada after defeating General Custer.

Boys were much more inclined to enjoy this than girls, although a few girls also liked it. Readers seemed to understand the background to the action as well as the action itself, but because there is no map weren't all that sure of the geography. Because it has a sympathetic portrayal of the problems faced both by the police and by the Indians as the buffalo were depleted, it could make good supplementary reading. Older readers may find it "thin", but if that is not a deterrent it is easy to read.

For those who like fictionalized history, especially boys, aged 9 to 12.

7-10 Ling, Frieda and Lau, Mee-Shan **The Maiden of Wu Long, The Axe and the Sword**

illus. Joseph Loh
Kids Can Press, 1978 unpaged. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Far Eastern
Setting: Village, Asia
Time: Long ago

Two Asian folktales are printed in bilingual text: *The Maiden of Wu Long* is the story of a man who has to dig through a mountain to save his village; *The Axe and the Sword* is a humourous account of the misfortunes of a youth who mistakenly follows his father's advice.

The book suffers from a rather dull cover and from the lack of identification of the country of origin of the folktales. Despite that, readers found both stories entertaining enough, but the second story was judged more plausible and humourous, and its lesson more believable.

For 7 to 10 year old readers.

10-12 Little, Jean **Listen for the Singing**

Clarke, Irwin, 1977 215 pages. $10.95 cloth $5.95 paper

Type of Story: Growing Up/Multiculturalism
Setting: City, Toronto, Ontario
Time: World War II, 1939

In this sequel to *From Anna*, a German family have had several years to adjust to the new life in Canada. Thirteen-year-old Anna faces the adjustment of leaving her special class for the sight-handicapped to go to regular high school classes, while over all of them, but particularly over her eighteen-year-old brother Rudi, looms the shadow of the impending war between their old homeland and their new.

This is a rather quiet story of growing inner strengths, but its lack of real action and excitement made it less than engaging for many readers. A few, however, liked it very much. There are really two stories, Anna's day-to-day coping with her handicap and the family's coping with the stresses that the War places on it. Few of the readers felt the same sense of identification and empathy for either that *From Anna* provoked.

For readers aged 10 to 12; some younger good readers may also enjoy it.

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"[I like to read] Science Fiction based on the future [and] stories impossible to happen – but makes sense – where the hero is about my age." Reader #635, 12 year old boy."

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"I like anything except Canadian pioneer books for they are long, drab and boring. More like a history book than pleasure reading. EDUCATION SURROUNDS YOU!" Reader #41, 12 year old girl.

Mascayano, Ismael **The Daughter of the Sun**

6-8 illus. by the author
Kids Can Press, 1978 unpaged. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Peruvian
Setting: Rural
Time: Long ago

This ancient Peruvian legend, presented in both English and Spanish, describes the growing friendship between a shepherd boy and the daughter of the sun and how they are punished for this friendship.

Readers were disinclined to explain why they gave this legend such indifferent ratings. They complained mildly about the illustrations which, to the adults, portray the different Peruvian customs and culture better than the story. It would be best used as a read-aloud study in ethnic differences; only in this way would the Peruvian culture be fully appreciated, or could a good discussion on what friendship means be engendered.

Best read aloud in multicultural studies with children 6 to 8.

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"This book was not as exciting as I think a book should be." Reader #645, 11 year old boy.

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Melzack, Ronald **Raven Creator of the World**

8-11 illus. Laszlo Gal
Little, Brown, 1970 91 pages. $7.95 cloth

Type of Story: Folklore: Inuit
Setting: North, Arctic
Time: Long ago

This is a collection of ten legends that explain to non-native youngsters the ancient Inuit beliefs about the creation of the earth and its creatures.

Those children who like legends enjoyed these stories very much, and particularly liked the illustrations. These notions of creation that were so different from their own religious beliefs were disturbing to some. While there are some difficult words, the readers found the short stories easily read. They make good bedtime reading, and would also be useful in junior grades in teaching Inuit beliefs and legends.

Good reading for children ages 8 to 11 who like legends or stories about the Inuit.

Melzack, Ronald **Why the Man in the Moon Is Happy and Other Eskimo Creation Stories**

8-12

illus. Laszlo Gal
McClelland and Stewart, 1977 64 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Folklore: Inuit
Setting: Wilderness, Arctic
Time: Long ago

This is a collection of eight Inuit legends of creation, retold especially for a non-Inuit audience. The stories explain the creation of the Sun, Moon and all living creatures, the winds and mist, the Narwhal, white reindeer, and even the white man.

An interest in reading about other beliefs helped children to enjoy this book, and those who liked the legends also liked the illustrations. Though the stories are short, the younger readers will need help, and older readers who prefer more wordy stories may find them "young".

For readers 8 to 12 who like legends.

Reekie, Isabel M. **Red, Horse of the West**

10-11

illus. Alan Daniel
Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972 96 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Historical: Riel Rebellion/Early Settlement
Setting: Prairie, Brandon, Manitoba
Time: 1885

The spring of 1885 in Manitoba was a time of uneasiness for settlers because of the Indian and Metis uprising. During this period, Red, a special and valuable horse, is stolen from its young owner, who searches through southern Manitoba and into Montana until Red is finally located.

This large print, large format book had too difficult a story for many readers under ten, and yet seemed too young and easy for those over eleven. In between, and if they didn't mind horse stories, readers found it exciting. They felt it contained quite a bit of information, and there is a glossary to help explain things. Very good younger readers could well enjoy it, as could older readers who appreciate short stories.

Exciting for 10 or 11 year olds, or some younger or older readers who like historical or horse stories.

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"[The title] sounds stupid, boring, dumb, etc... it was pretty good once I got past the title." Reader #146, 12 year old girl.

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"[I didn't finish the book] because I WASN'T impressed. The book sounds like a Grade One book, for example 'John rides his bike'." Reader #218, 9 year old girl.

Saunders, Marshall **Beautiful Joe**

11-14 McClelland and Stewart, 1972 (c.1934) 266 pages. $4.95 paper

Type of Story: Animal
Setting: Town, Fairport, Maine
Time: 1930's

This is the "autobiography" of a young dog who is cruelly mutilated by his first master and is rescued and nursed back to health by a large and loving family.

Many readers found this a very satisfying book, and appreciated the high moral tone and the message about cruelty to animals. Its length, sad beginning, and the attributing of human feelings to the dog deterred some others. Quite young readers who are good readers might well enjoy it if they did not find these features a problem.

For children 11 to 14, and some younger children, who like dog stories.

Seton, Ernest Thompson **Wild Animals I Have Known**

11-13 McClelland and Stewart, 1977 (c.1898) 298 pages. $3.95 paper

Type of Story: Realistic Animal
Setting: Rural, Canada, U.S.A., England
Time: Late 19th century, early 20th century

There are eight stories about wild animals in this classic. Five have Canadian settings. They all convey the message that wild animals always come to a tragic end.

For the most part our readers accepted this message, and about half of them found the stories interesting. The cover of the book was felt to be very unattractive and to give a false impression of the contents. Because of this, almost no one would have picked this book to read.

Appreciated most by children age 11 to 13.

Sloan, Glenna Davis **Spotlight on Liz**

11-14+ Macmillan, 1977 124 pages. $2.30 paper

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: Small town, Ontario
Time: Present

Sixteen-year-old Elizabeth Terry's chance to attend a drama camp is in jeopardy because of her mother's opposition. Her determination to go leads her into actions that force her to face herself and others with more maturity.

Readers agreed that the cover of this book is terrible. Beyond that though, they found the story quite good and realistic; many could understand the heroine's frustrations. Many readers thought it a girl's book, but although the younger boys did not enjoy it, the older boys liked it almost as much as the girls did. It can be read and enjoyed by quite young readers but will be understood better by middle teenagers.

For readers 11 to 14 and older, especially girls.

Takashima, Shizuye **A Child in Prison Camp**

10-14+ illus. by the author
Tundra, 1971 unpaged. $3.95 paper

Type of Story: Biography/Art Book
Setting: Small town, central British Columbia
Time: 1942-1964

This is an autobiographical account of the dislocation of a Japanese Canadian family from their Vancouver home to an internment camp in the interior of British Columbia. Told in the form of a nine-year-old's diary, it is beautifully illustrated with soft water colours in a large picture book format.

Perhaps it is a statement on prevailing attitudes toward art that almost none of the children enjoyed the award-winning illustrations at all. Only a very few of them, and they were very young, would have chosen the book from a library. Even when asked to read and review the book for this survey, a large number of the children didn't finish it; they found the deceptively simple style of writing with its short choppy sentences uncompelling. But for those who overcame their reservations about the appearance, the size, and the style, reading it was a moving and shocking experience, a true story expressively written that revealed to them, apparently for the first time, that Canada interned her own citizens. But even they did not, for the most part, appreciate the water colour illustrations.

A moving story for those who can be persuaded to read it, from age 11 to 14, and even adult.

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"I would be a little scared to [recommend it to a friend] because a lot of my friends are mystery fans and I don't think would enjoy this book – I would certainly suggest it to M.... G...." Reader #175, 11 year old girl.

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Tardif, Louis **Singled Out**

12-14+ Macmillan, 1974 188 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: Urban, Ottawa, Ontario
Time: Present

Seventeen-year-old high school student Pete Daly begins managing local rock bands and meets a new group called "Singled Out". Together they learn of the hardships and dangers as well as the fun of the local rock scene.

This was another "good, but not very" book about contemporary teenagers that our readers found interesting and exciting in parts, but with which they did not seem to really identify. The hero's encounters with the drug ring and a fairly serious romance probably limit its appeal to younger readers who could read this not-too-difficult book. Like many books of this sort, its moral is quite obvious and good triumphs in the end.

For readers 12 to 14 and older, especially those who have an interest in modern music groups.

Toye, William **Cartier Discovers the St Lawrence**

9-11 illus. Laszlo Gal
Oxford, 1970 32 pages. $3.95 paper

Type of Story: Historical: Exploration
Setting: St. Lawrence River valley
Time: 1534-41

This is a factual account of Jacques Cartier's two voyages of exploration to New France in 1534 and 1535, and the ill-fated attempt at colonization in 1541. Ample reference is made to the journals of the voyages, and there are lavish illustrations and maps.

While not a ready choice for reading for fun, children did respect this as a very useful and informative book that they suggest would be excellent for doing projects. The illustrations were especially well regarded as an adjunct to the text.

Very readable history for children 9 to 11.

Toye, William **How Summer Came to Canada**

6-9 illus. Elizabeth Cleaver
Oxford, 1978 (c.1969) 32 pages. $4.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Micmac Indian/Art Book
Setting: Wilderness, eastern Canada
Time: Long ago

Glooskap helps out his Micmac people when Winter comes down from the north and the land becomes frozen and white.

This picture-story book was enjoyed as much for the pleasing picture compositions as for the story itself. Those who liked it were very enthusiastic. Parents enjoyed both the colourful illustrations and the complementary poetic, alliterative style of writing.

For readers 6 to 9 who like Indian legends, or a book with many colourful illustrations and a minimum of text.

Wallace, Ian and Wood, Angela **The Sandwich**

5-8 illus. by the authors
Kids Can Press, 1975 unpaged. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Lifestyle/Multiculturalism
Setting: Urban, Toronto, Ontario
Time: Present

Vincenzo's classmates react to his "stinky" meat sandwich with disgust. With his Dad's help, he learns how to enjoy both his sandwich and his friends.

Although all children indentified very strongly with the dilemma of the outsider, they did not particularly enjoy this story on their own. Younger ones found its presentation difficult and unattractive, older ones found it more appealing in appearance but less interesting in content. It seems most successful when read aloud (as it must be for most up to eight) and discussed.

For children 5 to 8 years old.

Wilkinson, Doug **Sons of the Arctic**

11-13 illus. Prudence Seward
▲ Clarke, Irwin, 1980 (c.1965) 179 pages. $3.75 paper

Type of Story: Native people:Inuit/Adventure/Survival
Setting: Arctic wilderness, Eclipse Sound, Baffin Island, Northwest Territories
Time: Recent

Following a fishing expedition with their father, three Inuit boys aged nine to twelve set off for home alone and on foot. The long trek over the hills is fraught with danger and challenge.

The appearance of the book was almost unanimously rejected, and yet it provided some solid entertainment, if not intense enjoyment, to those who enjoy books about wilderness adventure. There are many details of Inuit life and culture, and the book could well be used as a teaching aid.

For readers 11 to 13 who enjoy northern adventure.

GROUP V

Between 40% and 55% of the readers found these books acceptable. Like those in Group IV, these books tend to be either very mediocre books for younger children or very narrow interest books for older ones. Historical fiction and Indian and Inuit legends and stories abound in Groups IV and V, but those readers who know their own tastes can find much to enjoy.

The quotes from children that are interspersed among the reviews illustrate some of the trends in children's opinions. Please note that they do not refer specifically to the books on the same page.

For an explanation of the marginal symbols and of the evaluation process, see the Explanatory Notes (pp. 1-4).

7-10

Allinson, Beverley and O'Kelly, Barbara

Kids Like Us Series

Methuen, $8.95 per set, $3.95 each title

Type of Story: Adventure/Fantasy
Setting: Various
Time: Present

Kids Like Us: "Click", "Flashback", "Trips", "Wallpaper"
illus. by photographs by Tom Skuda
1976, 32 pages

A group of city children have a series of adventures: they visit a zoo and a West Indian parade with a camera, visit Chinatown, go back in history, and publish a newspaper. The series is lavishly illustrated by both colour and black and white photographs.

Each of the booklets in this set was reviewed by about sixteen children aged seven to eleven, in grades two to six. It is obviously a well-intended series showing inter-racial friendships and Canadian city locations. Children found the photographs nice, and the stories mercifully short but that is about all they could find to commend them. The texts were found to be very disjointed, and the different locations and racial backgrounds apparently had no impact. The children themselves judged them most suitable for (but they were not necessarily more appealing to) eight- to ten-year-olds.

The 13th Floor: "Shortstop", "Small Talk", "Groaning Up's", "Turkey Pops"
illus. by photographs by David Street
1977, 32 pages.

Four children who live in the same city apartment building fool around together and each discovers something different happens when they press the non-existent button for the 13th floor. Each of the four books includes a happening.

Each booklet of the set was reviewed by about seventeen children aged six to eleven, grade one to six. Another formula-written set, it depicts children escaping the boredom of life in an inner city apartment building. The photographs again told most of the stories, or what there were of them, but being in black and white were not so pleasing as those in the other sets in this series. (Obviously written with a purpose, they might serve some special ones; reading for fun is not among them.) The children themselves thought the books most suited to six- to eight-year-olds, but children that age didn't really like them any better than those up to ten.

Penny Dreadfuls: "The Hardcastle Legacy", "The Secret Formula", "The West Woods Monster", "The Phantom Sailors"
illus. by photographs by the authors
1979, 32 pages.

Three pre-teenage girls share adventures in the Toronto area while playing detective in the city and in the woods, and two similar-aged boys share adventures with trains and a boat in Halifax.

This set was read by a small army of children from grade two to six, aged seven to eleven, on average sixteen readers per booklet. In general the lukewarm response to the earlier sets was repeated although the reception of the different titles was more varied; the *Phantom Sailors* bombed entirely and the *West Woods Monsters* was not too bad, and the other two were middling. The responses reflected resigned tolerance (they are mercifully short and the photographs interesting) rather than enjoyment. The messages this set carries is inter-racial friendship and regional diversity, neither of which the readers deigned to comment on, or were oblivious to (which appears the more likely). As recreational reading they fail to appeal, although they possibly could have some use as a school aid combined with a Language Arts or a Life-in-Society programme. Readers seven to nine or ten felt most comfortable with the set.

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"[I like to read] any well-written book. A topic that I normally like could be destroyed in a badly written book." Reader #173, 13 year old boy.

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"I finished half but I was forcing myself to read so I stopped." Reader #762, 13 year old girl.

Aubry, Claude **The Magic Fiddler and Other Stories of French Canada**

13-14+

illus. Saul Field
PMA Books, 1979 (c.1968) 116 pages. $4.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Canadian
Setting: Rural, Quebec
Time: Long ago

Ten French Canadian folktales are retold with slightly modern interpretations.

The cover of this book and the black and white illustrations were quite actively disliked. On the other hand, the legends themselves, while not being judged particularly enjoyable, were considered well written and interesting and gave a deeper understanding of the French Canadian cultural background. This appreciation would probably extend to anyone, including adults, with an interest in the subject.

For ages 13 and up who have an interest in legends or French Canadian culture.

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"The colour blue was used a lot and made you think of the ocean."
Reader #286, 9 year old girl.

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Barnhouse, Dorothy P. **Quest of the Golden Gannet**

12-14

Breakwater, 1979 97 pages. $7.95 cloth $4.95 paper

Type of Story: Historical Adventure
Setting: England and at sea enroute to Newfoundland
Time: 1690's

When young Tad Evans' father fails to return from a fishing expedition to New Founde Lande the boy and his great-uncle, "Skipper", ship out on a sailing vessel in search of him. Against the backdrop of a 17th century sea voyage complete with mutinous sailors and hidden treasure, Tad uncovers the mystery of his father's whereabouts and helps his uncle realize a dream.

Even fans of historical fiction were only mildly enthusiastic about the story and its plethora of nautical details. The mystery adventure failed to come alive and many starters were lost by the wayside. Even those who enjoyed it as a sea adventure apparently failed to grasp the details or the significance of the historical context.

Its appeal seems limited to avid readers of historical fiction or sea stories.

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"I don't think this could happen but I could have a dream about it."
Reader #862, 5 year old girl.

Benham, Leslie and Benham, Lois — **The Heroine of Long Point**

9-10

illus. Vernon Mould
Macmillan, 1963 113 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Historical Adventure
Setting: Marine, Long Point, Lake Eire, Ontario
Time: 1854

When a schooner carrying grain from Amherstbury to Toronto is shipwrecked off Long Point in an early winter storm, the crew of eight is rescued by a courageous woman who lives on the shore. Most of the story is told from the viewpoint of seventeen-year-old Lee Harp, the youngest member of the crew.

Although about half of the readers in a narrow age range liked the story, neither they nor those who didn't like it said very much about it. It is confusing in its nautical detail for very young readers – although it looks as if it is intended for them – and too simple and short for accomplished older ones. For a few of those in between, and especially if they like sea adventures, it was quite exciting.

For readers 9 or 10 who like historical adventure.

Burnford, Sheila — **Bel Ria**

11-14+ Seal Books, 1979 (c.1977) 204 pages. $2.25 paper

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Type of Story: Animal
Setting: On the battle front in France, at sea, and England
Time: World War II

A little circus dog, displaced from his home in war-torn France, is passed by a succession of human benefactors across the sea to a secure home in England.

This is not a "children's book", but it is one from which many children of a certain sort can derive immense pleasure. It provoked a more emotional response in half the readers than almost any other book we have reviewed, yet the other half couldn't get through it. It was found to be long, even by those who enjoyed it. The horrors of war are graphically described and the emotional ties between dog and man compassionately treated.

Deeply moving for those who like animal stories and who have adult reading stamina, from age 11 up.

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"In some places it sounds like a script from the "Beachcombers". I don't like the Beachcombers." Reader #289, 15 year old girl.

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"[The pictures] are mostly like on a Totem pole which are mostly a bore." Reader #70, 13 year old girl.

Carlson, Natalie Savage **The Talking Cat**

8-11 illus. Roger Duvoisin
Harper & Row, 1952 87 pages. $10.10 cloth

Type of Story: Folklore
Setting: Rural, Quebec
Time: 1800's

Seven stories of French Canada that have been passed down through the author's family are recounted for young readers.

These stories were not greeted with any enthusiasm by young readers. Marked discomforture was indicated by the fact that throughout the range children had trouble reading it, they failed to understand that these were real folktales, and they very frequently felt the book not entirely suited to their age. The dated language projects a somewhat patronizing attitude toward the "quaint peasants".

Best received by 8 to 11 year olds; reading aloud might make it more appealing.

Crooker, William S. **The Oak Island Quest**

12-14+ Lancelot, 1978 194 pages. $4.95 paper

Type of Story: Non-fiction
Setting: Oak Island, Nova Scotia
Time: 1795 to the present

This is a partly factual, partly theoretical look at the mystery surrounding Oak Island and its treasure.

While the subject could be extremely interesting to many, and some readers, thought it was, for most it was ensnared in too many facts, theories, names, places, numbers, graphs, and diagrams to come alive. They found it just too long and too full of detail to contend with, but they also acknowledged that it certainly had a lot of information in it.

For 12 to 14 year olds or older who have an insatiable thirst for information about Oak Island.

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"I found parts of it depressing but the humour made up for it." Reader #564, 11 year old girl.

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"It is a different kind of book and the 'talking' way it is written is nice for a change." Reader #76, 11 year old girl.

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"[I learned] you don't have to be a knight to do dangerous missions." Reader #718, 8 year old girl.

Desbarats, Peter **The Night the City Sang**

9-13 illus. Frank Newfeld
McClelland and Stewart, 1977 48 pages. $8.95 cloth

Type of Book: Poetry

Three poems, set in Montreal and all expressing the theme of happiness at Christmas time, are included in this collection: one is about a little Eskimo girl named Halibut York who is in hospital, the title poem is about a musician who brings joy with his music, and the third is about a female devil, Lucretia, who comes to earth to find the meaning of Christmas.

Not many children seem to like poetry on their own; those who do, enjoyed these very much. Those who don't, admitted somewhat grudgingly that, for poems, these weren't bad. The first poem appealed more to the younger children. The second and third were a little more difficult to understand, and have more substance to appeal to the young teenager. Full of references to Montreal and the St. Lawrence, they are "fun fairy tales" that would be especially good for teachers looking for lighthearted Canadian poetry for middle school and up.

For ages 9 to 13, or older.

Downie, Mary Alice **The King's Loon/Un huart pour le roi**

8-11 illus. Ron Berg
Kids Can Press, 1979 46 pages. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Historical/Adventure
Setting: Frontier, Quebec to Kingston
Time: 1643

André is an eleven-year-old from Quebec City who stows away on Count Frontenac's expedition to meet the Iroquois, and along the way captures a loon as a gift for the King of France. The text is in both English and French, in "tumble" format.

The general feeling toward this book was of polite boredom. A few eight-year-olds were more mildly interested, but many also had difficulty reading it, or had to have it read to them. While there is no lack of descriptive reference to lifestyle of the period, and description of the voyageurs, their canoes and equipment, the surroundings, and the Indian encampment, children seemed too uninterested to find it important. Neither did the bilingual presentation have favourable impact.

Suitable for good readers of 8 to 11.

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"[I enjoyed it] because it finished happy." Reader #639, 7 year old boy.

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"If I didn't [finish] I would be crazy because it was very good." Reader #24, 13 year old boy.

German, Tony **River Race**

11-14 PMA Books, 1979 158 pages. $9.95 cloth $5.95 paper

Type of Story: Historical Adventure/Lumbering
Setting: Frontier town and logging camp, Gatineau and Ottawa River valleys
Time: mid-1800's

A sequel to *Tom Penny*, this story recounts the fifteen-year-old hero's adventures in the rough-and-tumble life of logging on the Gatineau River.

Many readers found this an exciting and informative adventure. Yet many others found they were just unequal to the task of struggling through the slower passages that separated the more rousing action episodes. The sense of the sometimes raw life and the conflicts between the classes, nationalities, and business interests both in the shanties and the burgeoning town is quite good.

For historical adventure fans aged 11 to 14.

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Q. Is the book a convenient size? A. "Yes, but you'd need pretty big pockets." Reader #637, 8 year old boy.

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"A book would not be decorated if it didn't have pictures and colours." Reader #896, 7 year old girl.

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Harris, Christie **Forbidden Frontier**

10-14 illus. E. Carey Kenney
Atheneum, 1968 210 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Historical Adventure: Gold Rush
Setting: Frontier fort, Kamloops and the Cariboo, British Columbia
Time: 1860's

The lives of Alison Stewart, daughter of the Scottish Hudson Bay Company trader and his Haida wife, and Megan Scully, daughter of an Irish servant, are deeply affected by the changes wrought by the influx into the Pacific North West of people seeking gold.

The excitement of a historical adventure appealed to some readers, but not too many. The book is long, the two heroines are introduced in two separate segments, and many readers did not stick with it long enough to sort it all out. It is crammed with historical information about the fur trade, the Indians of the North West, and the Gold Rush, as well as life in a British Crown Colony, and many readers felt they had learned a good deal of the times.

For historical adventure readers, age 10 to 14.

Harris, Christie **Mouse Woman and the Mischief-Makers**

10-12 illus. Douglas Tait
McClelland and Stewart, 1977 115 pages. $11.95 cloth

Type of Story: Folklore: Northwest Coast Indian
Setting: Woodland and sea, West Coast/Pacific
Time: Long ago

This is yet another collection of West Coast Indian legends about Mouse Woman, a tiny spirit who helps young people in trouble – especially trouble caused when something is not done in the proper fashion.

This book disappointed several who expected to find it more interesting. Many readers said they found it too farfetched, and it appealed only to those who enjoy Indian legends. The short stories were felt easy to read by the children. Because the oral tradition is well conveyed, an enthusiastic teacher could well do a good job in the classroom to present these legends to the junior grades.

For readers aged 10 to 12, especially if interested in Indian legends.

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"I didn't finish it because the print was too small and it wasn't that much exciting." Reader #839, 8 year old boy.

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Harris, Christie **Once More Upon a Totem**

11-13 illus. Douglas Tait
McClelland and Stewart, 1978 (c.1973) 195 pages $4.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Northwest Coast Indian
Setting: Woodland, British Columbia
Time: Long ago

Three more tales of the Northwest Coast Indians are included. Two relate to the figures on the totem decorations, salmon and raven; the other is a story of the Shaman's art.

As with the earlier, *Once Upon a Totem*, readers found the stories variable in appeal, and while they did not as a group rate the book with any great enthusiasm, they at least enjoyed it more than they expected to. Mostly, though, only the dedicated readers of Indian legends were less than reluctant; they often said they learned interesting things about the legends and customs.

For readers 11 to 13 who like legends or Indian lore.

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"There was too much description and not enough action." Reader #617, 9 year old girl.

Harris, Christie **Sky Man on the Totem Pole?**

12-14 illus. Douglas Tait
McClelland and Stewart, 1975 167 pages. $10.95 cloth

Type of Story: Fantasy/Folklore: Northwest Coast Indian
Setting: Woodlands and outer space, British Columbia Coast
Time: Long ago

What if, in times long past, space travellers made contact with the Indians of the West Coast – and in the process learned the Indians' ecological concerns and in turn influenced the Indian legends?

While vocabulary is easy, this book's appeal was limited to the mature readers who enjoyed legends and were open to science-fiction ideas; they found the ideas quite intriguing and imaginative. Most of the other readers found them confusing.

Limited appeal to children aged 12 to 14 who have a liking for science fiction and Indian lore.

Hayes, John F. **Quest in the Cariboo**

10-14 illus. Fred Finley
Copp Clark, 1960 240 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Historical Adventure/Gold Rush
Setting: Frontier Vancouver to the Cariboo, British Columbia
Time: 1860's

When Roger Stone's brother is reported dead in the Cariboo, Roger sets out to find out what happened. The family's old Chinese cook arranges help from the Chinese community and sends along Matsu, a boy of Roger's age, to help in the search.

Lovers of historical fiction found this a quite enjoyable, well-written adventure. The appearance of the book itself was considered unappealing, and the style somewhat old fashioned. These factors, combined with an aversion to historical fiction in general, made many children refuse to read it. Yet avid readers and those who can read a rather long book did enjoy it.

For historical fiction buffs age 10 to 14.

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"[The inside pictures] never show the girls." Reader #81, 9 year old girl.

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"It was like you were right beside the characters." Reader #412, 13 year old boy.

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"[It happened] in moderate times and olden times." Reader #555, 10 year old boy.

Hill, Kay — **More Glooscap Stories: Legends of the Wabanaki Indians**

9-13

illus. John Hamberger
McClelland and Stewart, 1970 178 pages. $4.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Wabanaki Indian
Setting: Wilderness, Maritimes
Time: Long ago

This is a further reciting of the Wabanaki legends begun in *Glooscap and His Magic*. The tales recount how the Great Chief Glooscap does roaring battle with giants and wizards and how he teaches his wayward Indians and animals to live wisely and well.

Those few readers who enjoyed the book really enjoyed it, finding the tales exciting and interesting and learning many customs and beliefs of the Wabanaki Indians. Those who didn't enjoy it either said that they hated Indian legends or, having read several Indian books before this one, said that "enough is enough". The stories are told with humour and charm, and for those interested in the ancient customs of the Wabanaki and as a means of learning some Indian names, this book has definite merit.

For readers 9 to 13; slightly older readers might enjoy the tales if they like legends.

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"The cover does not have anything to do with the story." Reader #25, 10 year old girl.

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"I can't stand Indian and Eskimo stories." Reader #735, 11 year old boy.

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Johnston, Basil — **How the Birds Got Their Colours**

6-9

illus. Del Ashkewe
Kids Can Press, 1978 unpaged. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Ojibway Indian
Setting: Woodlands, Northern Ontario
Time: Long ago

An Ojibway legend tells how the birds, originally white, were given their colours. The text is in English and Ojibway.

The story failed to excite any except the legend lovers. While the numerous realistic and symbolic illustrations were initially intriguing, they were not sufficiently so to maintain interest in the story. Younger children need help in reading it.

For legend lovers aged 6 to 9.

Kurelek, William **A Prairie Boy's Summer**

10 up
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illus. by the author
Tundra, 1975 unpaged. $12.95 cloth $6.95 paper

Type of Story: Biography/Art Book
Setting: Farm, Canadian prairie
Time: 1930's

This is not a single story, but rather a collection of vignettes in words and paintings of the author-artist's boyhood activities on a prairie farm in the 'thirties.

Initially more appealing in appearance to the children – particularly to the older ones – than *A Prairie Boy's Winter*, it was less popular. Again, a very narrow age range thought it just right for their age and enjoyed it highly. In this case, the ten-year-olds liked it but nearly all children over ten thought the book young and uninteresting. The readers seemed less inclined to get caught up by the book than they did for the other volume, perhaps because the paintings gave the impression of a much older boy and the activities are harder for a young urban child to identify with. Many of the text portions are negative in tone, not likely to excite vicarious pleasure in young readers. Yet there were some at every age who appreciated the art, and for such people it can be enjoyable for its depiction of a bygone lifestyle.

Left to their own free choice, few children would bother to read this book, but it can be quite interesting to children about 10, and to others who like Kurelek's style.

Leitch, Adelaide **The Blue Roan**

9-13

illus. Charles Robinson
Macmillan, 1971 185 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: Urban and rural
Time: Present

Thirteen-year-old Roddy hopes that he can win lots of ribbons with a mare he gets for his thirteenth birthday, and so gain more prestige at school. The horse becomes bad tempered and unpredictable, but both mare and master eventually redeem themselves and Roddy grows up in the process.

About half the readers had difficulty getting through this book. The younger ones generally enjoyed it if they did manage to read it, but they found it long and slow at the beginning. Many of the older readers simply found it boring, or said they weren't interested in horse stories. None seemed to relate in any way to the problems of a young teenager coming to terms with himself and the appeal of the book seems limited to those who like horse stories of any sort.

Best liked by readers 9 to 13.

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"[It was] very heart-warming and at the end makes you understand your feelings a lot." Reader #419, 14 year old girl.

Lyngseth, Joan **Martin's Starwars**

7-12 illus. Steven Collier
Borealis, 1978 69 pages. $6.95 paper

Type of Story: Space Fantasy/Growing Up
Setting: A child's home and outer space
Time: Present

Richard's Christmas spacesuit has very special qualities: when he wears it he travels into space. There he meets an amazing friend, Martin (from Mars), who can assume any shape he likes. Together, they have many unusual adventures and meet other fantastic space creatures, to the dismay of Richard's parents who think he is "talking to himself" too much.

An appreciation of space stories or fantasy helped some boys and girls to enjoy this book, and the illustrations of the weird space creatures were found amusing. But readers found both the title and the cover unattractive and misleading (there are no "Starwars" involved), and the size too big. The suggestion of a lonely child's imaginary playmate escaped the children.

Enjoyable to some children ages 7 to 12 who like space fantasy.

MacDonald, Kendall James **Patrick the Diesel**

2-5 illus. by the author
Peguis, 1974 unpaged. $3.50 cloth $1.25 paper

Type of Story: Picture Book
Setting: Winnipeg and environs, Manitoba
Time: Present

Patrick moves too fast and derails his caboose, but learns his lesson and gets a safety award for staying on the rails a whole year.

While some of the parents and children thought it admirable that a nine-year-old had written this, the overwhelming opinion was that at best it is just too insubstantial to bother with. Parents also objected to the rebuke "You're stupid!". Any closer examination of the content is even less encouraging.

A trivial pre-school book with a dubious lesson in being good.

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"[I like to read] happy stories that make you laugh." Reader #723, 6 year old girl.

* * * * * * *

"Both me and my mom have read it and we don't like it." Reader #165, 10 year old girl.

* * * * * * *

"It was fast, active, exciting, full of surprises and veryvery veryveryveryvery funny." Reader #370, 12 year old boy.

Melzack, Ronald **The Day Tuk Became a Hunter and Other Eskimo Stories**

8-11

illus. Carol Jones
McClelland and Stewart, 1978 (c.1967) 92 pages $7.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Inuit
Setting: Arctic
Time: Long ago

Ten Inuit tales are retold in simple language and nicely illustrated with large black and white Eskimo-style drawings. The tales describe how the owl and raven got their colouring, the origin of the mammals of the arctic waters, and how a courageous boy saves his family from a polar bear.

The younger readers especially liked the appearance of the book, but only a few children really got much pleasure from the stories. One story in particular is very violent and many of the children did not seem to relate to it at all. Parents who read the stories enjoyed them and the illustrations much more than did the children, many of whom indicated that their interest in Eskimo stories has been long since satisfied.

For devotees of Eskimo stories, ages 8 to 11, it can be pleasant reading.

* * * * * * *

"I like to read a summary of the story on the back cover." Reader #693, 10 year old boy.

* * * * * * *

Nichols, Ruth **A Walk Out of the World**

10-12

illus. Trina Schart Hyman
Longmans, 1969 192 pages. $8.95 cloth

Type of Story: Fantasy
Setting: Magical world of lakes, forests and mountains
Time: Any time

Out for a walk in the woods one afternoon before supper, Judith and Tobit suddenly find themselves in another world, a strange and mysterious world of ugly dwarfs called kobalds, Water people, Forest people, and the entourage of an immortal queen whose members show a striking resemblance to Judith and Tobit.

Fantasy does not usually have wide appeal to children of this age, and this book was no exception. Many readers said simply they do not like that kind of book. Those who did like it were quite keen on it. They found it imaginative and exciting and compared it to *The Hobbit* and the *Narnia* books. Its age range of appeal was also narrow, with the concepts being challenging for the younger readers and the story itself soon losing its appeal to the older ones.

Children aged 10 to 12 who like fantasy found it engrossing.

Pelly, Linda **Nanabush & The Geese**

6-9 illus. Raymond McCallum
Saskatchewan Indian Cultural College, 1976 unpaged. $3.00 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Saulteaux Indian
Setting: Woodland, Saskatchewan
Time: Long ago

This is the story of Nanabush, a naughty young Indian, who wants to fly south with the geese. The old goose grants his wish, but Nanabush disobeys and we see how he is punished but escapes to go on to more trickery.

While readers found the black and white illustrations quite attractive, the story fell flat. The few who liked it were not very enthusiastic. Because it seemed better received when it was read aloud (as it will have to be even for some eight-year-olds), and because background material on legends and study questions are included, it might be somewhat more successful as classroom material than as recreational reading.

It appears appropriate, even though not very appealing, for 6 to 9 year olds.

Pitseolak, Peter **Peter Pitseolak's Escape From Death**

6-9 illus. by the author
McClelland and Stewart, 1977 unpaged. $5.95 paper

Type of Story: Native Peoples: Inuit
Setting: Arctic waters, Baffin Island, Northwest Territories
Time: 1950's

This is a true story of an Inuit father's and son's escape from death among the pack ice during a walrus hunting trip.

Readers respected this as a real story, but were not inclined to say much else about it. The simple colourful illustrations were much better liked than the story and convey a strong feeling of the north. The language is simple and direct, perhaps too much so as the story fails to have much impact on the readers.

Suitable for 6 to 9 year olds; the youngest will have to have it read aloud.

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"It is so thin it looks like an eight-year-old's book." Reader #175, 12 year old girl.

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"When you read the words it makes the story good!" Reader #568, 7 year old girl.

* * * * * * *

"[I learned] boys can do just as well as parents." Reader #614, 9 year old boy.

Powell, Ann **Strange Street**

5-8 illus. by the author
Kids Can Press, 1975 unpaged. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Lifestyle
Setting: Urban
Time: Present

Sam lives on Strange Street, the living embodiment of alternative lifestyles, and his friend Patti lives on Bright Street, straight from the dark ages in sex role stereotyping and artificial foods. A visit to Bright Street teaches him home is best.

Most of the children under seven had the book read to them; many children reported enjoying it while the parents reported the children often didn't get the message. The older children understood it better and enjoyed it less, perhaps finding the alternatives touched on just too numerous for one slight story, and the message that boys can cook and do dishes, and sometimes cry, rather obvious. Those adults who could profit from the message would probably be offended by its lack of subtlety.

An attempt that doesn't quite succeed, it may satisfy some parents or their children aged 5 to 8.

Radu, Kenneth **The Bird No One Noticed**

8-9 illus. Diane L. Radu
Borealis, 1975 unpaged. $3.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Indian
Setting: Northern forests
Time: Long ago

This is the legend of how the plain brown robin acquired a red breast by becoming the sun's messenger.

While the readers enjoyed this book more than they expected they would from its drab cover, the appeal was very limited: for most, the story simply did not capture their imagination. Its reception might be improved by reading aloud.

For 8 and 9 year olds who like legends.

GROUP VI

No substantial readership among children fourteen or younger was found for the books in this group. They were all very unpopular with the children. In a few cases, they were also considered totally unsuitable by the parents, and we cannot in conscience recommend any of them to young readers.

The quotes from children that are interspersed among the reviews illustrate some of the trends in children's opinions. Please note that they do not refer specifically to the books on the same page.

For an explanation of the marginal symbols and of the evaluation process, see the Explanatory Notes (pp. 1-4).

Ashlee, Ted **Night of the Sasquatch**

illus. Alan Daniel
Holt, Rinehart, 1973 182 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Adventure
Setting: Vancouver, Sechelt peninsula, British Columbia
Time: Present

Sixteen-year-old Jim Ormiston and his mates aboard the Gabriola have many and varied adventures while transporting men and supplies from Vancouver to the Sechelt peninsula in British Columbia.

This book was not a success with our readers. To quote one disappointed reader, "The Sasquatch was not in the book very much." Alas everything else was. It was reviewed by children from ten to fourteen. Many didn't bother to finish it, and those who did rated the book poorly. They just weren't interested in it.

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"Once is enough to read this book." Reader #863, 6 year old girl.

Bertelli, Mariella **The Shirt of a Happy Man**

illus. Laszlo Gal
Kids Can Press, 1977 unpaged. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Italian
Setting: A small kingdom, possibly Italy
Time: Long ago

This folktale, presented in English and Italian, is about a Prince who is going to die because he is so sad. His concerned father is told that only the shirt of a truly happy man will cure him. When such a happy man is finally found, it turns out he doesn't own a shirt.

Most readers wanted a solution to the Prince's problems and were disturbed by the abrupt ending of the book. Perhaps because of this, they missed the philosophical point of the story. Neither did they particularly enjoy the black and white illustrations. The book might have some redeeming qualities for those learning to read Italian, but because the plot could be set in any mediaeval Kingdom, the story does not really contribute to multiculturalism. The appeal to the seven- to nine-year-olds to whom it seems best suited was very low.

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"I learned not to read it again." Reader #622, 4 year old girl.

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Bleeks, Sheila J. **Cookies for Luke**

illus. Kelly Clark
Cherry, 1979 unpaged. $6.95 cloth

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: A child's home and neighbourhood
Time: Present

When Christopher calls on his friend Luke, he learns Luke has died. Luke's mother, his uncle, Christopher's mother, the mailman, and his playmate all offer conflicting explanations of what death means. Still bewildered about what is happening, he resolves to keep his memories of Luke and take Luke some cookies.

Parents overwhelmingly found this an unsatisfactory vehicle for explaining death to young children, unsatisfactory both to those who wished a religious explanation and those who did not. Reading it introduced confusion and bewilderment without facilitating explanation. It often did stimulate discussion when read aloud, but it was discussion which left neither parent nor child feeling they had gained much understanding. Surely not intended as entertainment, it certainly did not entertain the children aged four to eight for whom it is apparently appropriate. It seems largely a rationalization of how adults think a child might react, and as such may make adults more at ease with children's reactions. It does little, though, for the children. The attractive cover gives no warning of the content.

Brand, Dionne **Earth Magic**

illus. Roy Crosse
Kids Can Press, 1979 61 pages. $2.95 paper

Type of Book: Poetry

This is a collection of twenty-four short poems in free verse that describe the seasons, the life, and the times of Trinidad.

These quiet, evocative poems appealed only to the readers who already liked poetry, and even they were not especially interested in them. It might be more successful when read aloud or as a combined literary-cultural study with children aged eleven and older.

Cohen, Matt **The Leaves of Louise**

illus. Rikki
McClelland and Stewart, 1978 32 pages. $7.95 cloth

Type of Story: Fantasy
Setting: A child's home and school
Time: Present

People don't believe the stories Albert Smith tells – they just laugh and call him Albert D. Liar. When he reports that his plant Louise sings to him, and then flies away in space with a husband, they still don't.

Seldom have we reviewed such a singularly unpopular and unsatisfactory book. The very small minority who expressed some enjoyment also expressed the doubt (quite accurately) that many other children would like it. Children aged six to twelve and their parents consistently described the book as spooky, scary, strange, funny, and (most often) *weird*! They said it was disturbing and confusing with a nightmarish quality, and no one, adult or child, really felt they understood it.

Crawford, Isabelle Valancy **Fairy Tales**

edited Penny Petrone illus. Susan Ross
Borealis, 1977 85 pages. $9.95 paper

Type of Story: Fairy Tale
Setting: Fairy land
Time: Long ago

Six fairy tales – romantic, dramatic, and old fashioned – are presented in over-size format in large print and with abundant black and white illustrations.

Utter rejection greeted this infantile-looking book with its difficult vocabulary and convoluted and pretentious prose. Its reception laid to rest the misconception that some children will read anything. Assigned for review to the most competent and insatiable girl readers up to age eleven, they considered it beneath contempt. It has the unchallenged distinction of being the most disliked book we have surveyed, even by a group of readers remarkable for their tolerance of the printed word.

Davies, Peter **Fly Away Paul**

PaperJacks, 1976 (c.1974) 213 pages. $2.75 paper

Type of Story: Growing Up
Setting: Montreal, Quebec
Time: Present

Fourteen-year-old Paul lives in a home for homeless boys, rejected, repulsed, and disappointed by the people about him, his bleak present holding no hope for a happier future.

Soliciting reviews of this book was stopped midway through the intended schedule because of the adverse reaction of the readers and their parents. Without fail, parents doubted its suitability for children fourteen and under and some stated quite categorically that it should not be included in our survey nor available in grade school libraries. Readers' reports bore out their parents' misgivings. Those who did report were among our oldest and most mature contributors, and at fourteen to sixteen were at the top of or beyond the usual age range of our reviewers. Even so, the girls expressed disquiet while the boys were very upset by it. Adults' objections were based on the negative and destructive treatment of sexuality, the universal inadequacy of the adult characters, the failure of all of the hero's relationships with other children, and the unrelenting sense of futility that pervades the book. Many adults, particularly those with responsibility for children in institutions, might well benefit from this depressing look at life. Adolescents, particularly perceptive ones, find it disturbing and "sick".

Harris, Christie **Once upon a Totem**

illus. John Frazer Mills
McClelland and Stewart, 1978 (c.1973) 148 pages $4.95 paper

Type of Story: Folklore: Northwest Coast Indian
Setting: Woodlands and sea, British Columbia Coast
Time: Long ago

This is a collection of five Northwest Coast Indian legends.

Few readers liked this book and they found the stories quite varied in appeal, *The One-Horned Mountain Goat* and *The Wild Woman of the Woods* being the best. The majority of the readers found the stories boring and were emphatic in saying they don't like that kind of book. While not unsuitable for many children (probably it is best for ten- to twelve-year-olds), we found appeal extremely limited to a tiny fraction of readers who really like Indian legends.

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"West Coast Indians is not a subject that interests me." Reader #513, 13 year old boy.

Hiemstra, Mary **Gully Farm**

illus. Stephen Andrews
McClelland and Stewart, 1955 311 pages. Out of print

Type of Story: Historical:Settlement/Biography
Setting: Pioneer settlement, prairie, Saskatchewan
Time: 1903

The author was six years old when her family immigrated to Canada with the Barr Settlers. The book describes how the resourceful settlers overcame their many unexpected difficulties with humour and courage.

Exceptional readers as young as eleven enjoyed this, but other than the necessity of being accomplished readers, enjoyment seemed primarily related to an established interest in reading pioneer books, and such is rare among our readers. It was much better liked by adults, for whom it was a valuable and interesting record of the settlement. The flavour of the prairie as experienced for the first time by an observant child is vividly conveyed.

Kurelek, William **Lumberjack**

illus. by the author
Tundra, 1974 unpaged. $12.95 cloth $6.95 paper

Type of Story: Biography/Art Book/Lumbering
Setting: Lumbercamps, Ontario and Quebec
Time: 1940's

The artist-author describes with painting and words his experiences in northern bush camps of Ontario and Quebec.

To the children, this was by far the least appealing of the three Kurelek books reviewed. Like *A Prairie Boy's Summer* and *A Prairie Boy's Winter* it has a shape and presentation which make it look to children much easier and "younger" than it really is. Added to this was an abundant disinclination to read about lumberjacks. While the paintings were appreciated for their instructive detail, they did not engender the enthusiasm that was evident in some readers of the two prairie books. Readers accepted the facts in a detached way, and suggested it for a reference book for someone really interested in the subject. Given to readers from ten up, it had a flicker of real interest for a very few young teenage boys. Probably more an adult's than a child's book and possessing little visual appeal for children, it can nonetheless be appreciated by those interested in Kurelek's art or in lumbering.

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"I wouldn't have read it but you made me listen." Reader #621, 6 year old girl.

* * * * * * *

"I don't like most problem books where all they do is moan and whine about how fat or how ugly ... is. I don't mind Indian legends but I get sick of them if I read too many." Reader #564, 11 year old girl.

Leeder, Terry **Daughter of the Old Pioneer**

illus. Deborah Drew-Brook
Dundurn, 1979 63 pages. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Historical: Early Settlement/Biography
Setting: Prairie frontier, Grey County, Ontario to Souris, Manitoba
Time: 1880's

Based on Nellie McClung's autobiography, this recounts her family's move to Manitoba in the 1880's and their early pioneer life, from the perspective of the young Nellie.

Readers aged nine to twelve who appreciate historical biography in any form quietly enjoyed the book, but they, alas, are few and far between, and the book failed to capture any converts to the genre. Most readers found it simply not very interesting and said they learned nothing from it. However, they also found it short and easy to read, and it could appeal to either older or younger children who especially like quiet stories of pioneer days.

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"The book had interesting facts but was rather long and drawn out for a book that should be read for pleasure."Reader "#75, 13 year old boy.

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Leeder, Terry **A Fighting Lady**

illus. Deborah Drew-Brook
Dundurn, 1979 61 pages. $2.95 paper

Type of Story: Historical: Early Settlement
Setting: Frontier wilderness, Bay of Fundy area New Brunswick and Nova Scotia
Time: 1640's

The heroine of the story is Marie de la Tour, wife of Charles de la Tour. He is locked in a struggle over land claims with D'Aulnay Charnisay. The struggle takes the heroine from the de la Tour fort at Saint John to the Charnisay fort at Port Royal, to Boston, and to France, and culminates in a courageous but unsuccessful resistance, during her husband's absence, of an assault on her home by Charnisay's forces.

No one liked this book. Even those who struggled on to the end (and few did) found it hopelessly confusing. Adults also found it rambling and incoherent. No one had any clear picture either of the geography of the area, or of the historical context of the struggle. The events are so poorly described and the factual framework is so scant (there is not even a map to compensate for the incomprehensible text) that it cannot even be suggested as a good though boring reference text.

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"It is hard to understand why they bothered writing it." Reader #484, 7 year old girl.

Radu, Kenneth **The Mouse Who Came to Dinner**

illus. Diane L. Radu
Borealis, 1978 39 pages. $4.95 paper

Type of Story: Animal Fantasy
Setting: Woodlands and fields
Time: Any time

Deirdre Hen and Beau Mouse discover that enduring each other's terrible food and fending off each other's enemies is the true meaning of friendship.

Like the protagonists, the children found what they were dished up in this book just about indigestible. An overdone story full of affected language, it was found to be tedious by both children and their parents. One of the most poorly received books we have tested, it is suggested by the children themselves as suitable for 6 to 8 year olds.

Schwarz, Herbert T. **Windigo and Other Tales of the Ojibways**

illus. Norval Morrisseau
McClelland and Stewart, 1978 (c.1969) 40 pages. $9.95 cloth

Type of Story: Folklore: Ojibway Indian/Art Book
Setting: Wilderness, Lake Superior, Lake Nipigon Ontario
Time: Long ago

These legends are presented in a very scholarly way, and the Indian personality is conveyed by beautiful illustrations.

Both the tales and illustrations are too symbolic and the style is too didactic and academic to be appreciated by our readers, who were bored with the constant transformation of gods into animals and men. Only those children with a predisposition to Indian legends and who can read adult literature seem to like this book. It is probably more suitable to young adults or to adults as a book of Indian art.

Tierney, Frank M. **Silly Sally and the Snowman**

illus. Derry G. Timleck
Borealis, 1975 unpaged. $3.95 paper

Type of Story: Fantasy Adventure
Setting: Outdoors, winter
Time: Present

Sally and her friends build a snowman who comes alive and takes them to visit the Snowbell and the Snow people.

Neither the monochromatic illustration nor the story captured the interest of the children. Whether it was the lurid pink colour used for the print and the line drawings, the amateurish illustrations, or the silly story itself, this book made children decide they'd rather be doing something else. Parents who had to read it to them applauded their sound judgement. It was least objectionable to children four to six.

Appendix: How readers report

The children reported on the books they had read by means of a standard report form. It is made up of three sections. In the first section the children provide information about themselves and their reading habits. In the second section, to be filled in before the book is read, the children indicate their initial reactions to a book. Then, having read it, they give their opinions of it in the third section. Many of the questions overlap, so that the answers reinforce each other. Most can be answered by a simple yes-or-no answer, but ample opportunity is also given for fuller comment if a child has more to say and often the number, tone, and length of the free comments are very revealing. Parents are also invited to comment and often do.

Upon enrolling as reviewers, children and their parents are introduced to the project by means of the following letter:

Dear Reader,

Thank you for offering to review books for us. You are doing a very important job because the best way to find what *you* think of books is to ask *you*. Please be very honest. Whether you like a book we ask you to read or whether you don't, tell us as well as you can what you really think of it. ... If you are having a really hard time reading a book you don't have to finish, but please don't give up too soon. Then say what the problem is.

It is also very important to get your books and reports back on time – or even early – so that you can get a new book and someone else can get the one you had. Let the person who gives you your books know if you can't get the book done on time, and she can make special arrangements for you.

Could you please ask your parents to read this letter, too? Thanks for your help. We could not find the best books for children without your reports.

(Note to Parents: Many of the questions on the form don't pertain to books for small children or the children may have difficulty articulating the answers. Please use your good judgement in leaving blank spaces or in interpreting the questions or answers for those too young to understand or fill out the forms themselves. Try not to influence the answers, though; we want the children's spontaneous responses. Let them use their own words and express their own reactions even when the result is ungrammatical or poorly expressed. Although you may want to discuss them afterwards, please don't change the answers on the form.

Use the space on the last page to say anything you feel would be useful to the people collating the reports. And please help us by helping your child (of any age) to remember to *get the books and forms back on time*.)

Reader's Report Form

Reader: _____ Date due: _____ 19__

Please return to: _____ Tel: _____

CITIZENS' COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN
CANADIAN CHILDREN'S BOOKS

READER'S REPORT

ON PAGE ONE OF THIS FORM YOU ARE ASKED ABOUT YOURSELF AND HOW YOU LIKE READING, AND ON PAGES TWO AND THREE YOU ARE ASKED ABOUT THE BOOK YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO READ. PLEASE ANSWER THE QUESTIONS AS WELL AS YOU CAN, BUT DON'T WORRY IF YOU CAN'T ANSWER EVERY ONE. THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART.

Author: _____ Title: _____

Reader # _____ Birthdate: _____ Age: ____ Sex: ____ Grade: ___

Language spoken at home: English ____ French ____ Other _____

Language of education: English ____ French ____ Immersion _____

Do you usually read: more than 5 books a week _____

1 to 5 books a week _____

less than 1 book a week _____

	(very much)				(not much)
Do you like to read:	1	2	3	4	5

What do you like to read most: _____

_____

_____

*"*Since I started with this book club I like reading most things.*" Reader #614, 9 year old boy.*

Reader # _____

THESE QUESTIONS ARE ABOUT THE BOOK YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO READ. FROM YOUR ANSWERS WE CAN FIND OUT WHICH BOOKS CHILDREN REALLY LIKE. THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS. SAY EXACTLY WHAT YOU THINK. PLEASE ANSWER QUESTIONS 1 TO 7 BEFORE YOU READ THE BOOK.

1. Does the cover of the book make you want to read it? _____
2. Do you like the title? _____
3. Is the book a convenient size? _____
4. Is the print easy to read? _____
5. Do the inside pictures make you want to read the book? _____

_____

6. Can you say anything else about the appearance of the book? _____

_____

7. Would you have chosen it yourself from a library shelf? _____

ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS AFTER YOU HAVE FINISHED THE BOOK.

8. If you didn't finish the book, can you say why? _____

_____

9. Was the book read to you _____ or did you read it yourself? _____
10. What is the story about? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. Is WHERE the story happened important? YES _____ NO _____
12. If YES, where did it happen? _____
13. Is WHEN the story happened important? YES _____ NO _____
14. If YES, when did it happen? _____

* *"The cover looks like something that died." Reader #441, 13 year old boy.*

-3- Reader # _____

15. Can you imagine the events really happening? _____

Why? _____

16. Did the pictures add to your enjoyment of the story? _____

How? _____

17. Did you have any trouble finishing the book? _____

Why? _____

18. Did you have any trouble understanding the book because of unusual words (dialect) or difficult words? _____

PLEASE ANSWER THE NEXT TWO QUESTIONS BY CIRCLING THE NUMBER WHICH SHOWS HOW MUCH.

19. Did you enjoy the book? (A LOT) 1 2 3 4 5 (NOT AT ALL)

Can you explain why? _____

_____

20. Did you learn anything new or interesting?

(A LOT) 1 2 3 4 5 (NOT AT ALL)

Can you explain what? _____

_____

21. Would you recommend it to a friend? _____

22. Would you like to read other books by the same author? _____

23. Is it suitable for your age? _____

24. What other ages do you think would enjoy it? _____

25. Do you think it would appeal most to girls _____ boys _____ both _____

26. Parent's or teacher's comments: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

* *"I am 5. Any 5 I see I want to put a circle around it." Reader #641, 5 year old boy.*

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Archaeology
Rolfe **1** 13, Swayze **1** 74

Art Books
Kurelek **2** 69,88,97, Lunn **2** 8, Schwarz **2** 99, Takashima **2** 75, Toye **2** 30,57,76

B

Ballet
Tennant **1** 14, Weir **2** 12

Bilingual
English/French: Cook and Davis **1** 77, Downie **2** 83, Kronby **2** 23, Newton-White **1** 37, Schaffer **2** 52
English/Other: Bannerji **2** 35, Bertelli **2** 94, Chandon **2** 38, Ling and Lau **2** 71, Mascayano **2** 72, McDougall **2** 46

Biography and Biographical Fiction
French **2** 66, Hanna **2** 41, Hiemstra **2** 97, Kurelek **2** 69, 88,97, Leeder **2** 98, Takashima **2** 75, Wood **1** 29

Buried Treasure
Bice **1** 49, Clark **1** 6, Cowan **1** 52, Crooker **2** 00

C

Canadian History *see* names of specific topics or events, Adventure – Historical, and Fantasy – Historical

Careers *see* individual careers or occupations

Children as authors/illustrators
Côté **2** 18, Hildes **2** 21, Korman **2** 7,44, Tap **2** 56, MacDonald **2** 89, MacPherson **1** 43

Children as strong central characters
Boys: Acland **2** 33, Allen **2** 14, Andersen **1** 65, **2** 64, Aubry **1** 31, Ballantyne **1** 48, Bice **1** 49, Blades **1** 48, Bradford **2** 65, Brown **2** 37, Buchan **1** 50, Carruthers **1** 6, Childerhose **1** 18, Clark, J. **1** 6, Clark, M.G. **2** 39, Craig **1** 36, **2** 39,65, Dunham **1** 53, Faulknor **1** 38, Feather **1** 54, Fryer **1** 20, German **1** 55, **2** 84, Greene **1** 20, Haig-Brown **1** 20,71, Hayes **1** 9,21,39,56,69,70, **2** 86, Hill **2** 42, Houston **1** 9,22,41, **2** 67, Hughes **1** 10, **2** 6,22, Hunt **2** 43, Hyde **1** 10, Ireland **2** 43, Knapp **2** 22, Korman **2** 7,44, Mackay **2** 25,26, MacKenzie **2** 26, Major **2** 46, McCarthy **2** 27, Mitchell **1** 71, Moore **1** 72, Mowat **1** 25, Newfeld **2** 48, Paperny **1** 27, Read **1** 28, Reaney **1** 28, Reekie **2** 73, Richler **2** 11, Seager **2** 28, Siamon **2** 12, Sivers **2** 54, Truss **1** 62, Turner **1** 62, Wilkinson **2** 77, Williams **2** 59, Wilson **1** 14, **2** 32, Wood **1** 29,45, Young **1** 15,30
Girls: Barton **1** 49, Blades **1** 48, Brain **2** 36, Brill **1** 33, Chetin **2** 38, Cowan **2** 5, Doyle **2** 19, Drabek **2** 19, Duncan **1** 8, Fryer **1** 20, Hanna **2** 41, Harris **2** 84, Hiemstra **2** 91, Hughes **1** 10, **2** 6,22, Kellerhals-Stewart **1** 56, Little **2** 24,71, Lunn **1** 24, Marquis **1** 24, Montgomery **1** 12, Mowat **1** 25, Munsch **2** 9,48, Paperny **1** 27, Piper **2** 10, Powell **2** 49, Rivkin **2** 51, Sauer **1** 60, Shipley **2** 53, Siamon **2** 12, Smucker **1** 13, Tennant **1** 14, Walker **1** 14, Weir **2** 12,59, Wolk **2** 32

Christmas
Desbarats **2** 83, Kellerhals-Stewart **2** 68, Lawrence **2** 23, Little **2** 24, Marquis **1** 24, Moore **2** 9, Newton-White **1** 44

City Life
Allinson **2** 78, Duncan **1** 8, Kronby **2** 23, Lunn **1** 24, Pasternak and Sutterfield **2** 49, Powell **2** 92, Schemenauer **2** 28, Wallace and Wood **2** 76, Wolk **2** 32, Young **1** 30

Conservation
Harris **1** 69, Kellerhals-Stewart **1** 69, Wolk **2** 32

Cookbook
Garcia **2** 00, Franklyn **2** 41

D

Drawing
Carruthers **1** 6, Phelan **1** 82, Stren **2** 29

E

Exploration
Acland **1** 47, Downie **2** 83, Leitch **1** 58, Toye **2** 76

F

Fairy Tales
Abell **2** 15, Alderson **2** 14,61, Bleeks **2** 36, Crawford **2** 95, Lunn **2** 8, Piper **2** 10

Fall of Quebec
Henty **1** 40

Family Relationships
Alderson **2** 34,61,62, Barton **1** 49, Bellingham **2** 15, Berton **2** 16, Bradford **2** 65, Callaghan **1** 66, Carruthers **1** 6, Chetin **2** 38, Cook **1** 19, Daveluy **1** 78, Doyle **2** 19, Duncan **1** 8, Eckert **1** 53, Engel **2** 40, Faulknor **1** 38, Fryer **1** 20, Hunt **2** 43, Ireland **2** 43, Little **2** 24,71, Mackay **2** 25,26, Mackenzie **2** 26, Major **2** 46, Moore **1** 72, Paperny **1** 27, Sloan **2** 74, Takashima **2** 75, Williams **2** 59

Fantasy
Contemporary; Allinson **2** 78,63, Allison **2** 64, Bailey **2** 34, Berton **2** 16, Carlson **1** 66, Clark **1** 7,34,51, Cohen **2** 95, Côté **2** 18, Drabek **2** 19, Engel **2** 19, Harris **1** 69, Kellerhals-Stewart **1** 41, Layton **2** 45, Leach and Rankin **2** 7, Lyngseth **2** 89, Moore **2** 9, Nichols **2** 90, Piper **2** 10, Richler **2** 11, Rolfe **1** 29, Salsberg **2** 52, Sauer **1** 60, Schemenauer **2** 28, Tap **2** 56, Tierney **2** 30,56,99

Historical Fantasy; Cook **1** 35, Cook and Davies **1** 77, Laurence **2** 23, Lunn **1** 24, McLaughlin **1** 43, Wuorio **1** 74, Young **1** 75

Farming and Ranching
Bergelt **2** 64, Eckert **1** 53, Faulknor **1** 54, McGill **1** 59, St. Pierre **1** 83, Walker **1** 14

Fishing
Feather **1** 54, Hagielund **1** 69, Haig-Brown **1** 75, MacKenzie **1** 42, Mowat **1** 25, Shaw **1** 42

Folklore
Canadian: Aubry **2** 80, Carlson **1** 66, **2** 82, McLaughlin **1** 43, Newfeld **2** 48, Obed **2** 48, Sherwood **2** 53, Young **1** 75

Indian: Cleaver **2** 17, Harris **1** 69, **2** 66,67,81,85,86,96, Hill **2** 42,87, Houston **1** 22, Johnston **2** 87, Pelly **2** 91, Radu **2** 92, Schwarz **2** 99, Toye **2** 30,57,76
Inuit: Houston **1** 23,41, Melzack **2** 72,73,90
Non-Canadian: Bannerji **2** 35, Bertelli **2** 94, Chandon **2** 38, Cox **2** 39, Ling and Lau **2** 71, Mascayano **2** 72, McDougall **2** 46

Friendship
Allen **2** 14, Brown **2** 37, Charles **2** 17, Childerhose **1** 18, Cook **1** 19, Davidson **1** 8, Desbarats **2** 18, Gould **2** 6, Houston **1** 9, Little **2** 24, Mascayano **2** 72, Mowat **1** 25, Reekie **1** 29, Reese **2** 10, Rivkin **2** 51, Sivers **2** 54, Smucker **1** 13, Stren **2** 55, Tardif **2** 75, Weir **2** 12, Wolk **2** 32, Zander **2** 60

Fur Traders
Harris **2** 84, Kouhi **1** 57, Leeder **2** 69,98, Shipley **2** 53

G

Gold Rush
Cariboo: Duncan **1** 8, Harris **2** 84, Hayes **2** 86, Leeder **2** 70, McLaughlin **1** 71
Klondike: Berton **2** 65, London **1** 41, Hughes **1** 10

Great Depression
Mitchell **1** 72, Mowat **1** 12,25,72

Growing Up
Younger age group: Alderson **2** 34,61,62, Bleeks **2** 94, Desbarats **2** 18, Lyngseth **2** 89, Mole **2** 47, Munsch **2** 9,48
Intermediate age group: Aubry **1** 31, Bellingham **2** 15, Bradford **2** 65, Brain **2** 36, Brown **2** 37, Callaghan **1** 66, Chetin **2** 38, Cook **1** 52, Doyle **2** 19, Duncan **1** 8, Dunham **1** 53, Engel **2** 40, Feather **1** 54, Haig-Brown **1** 20, Kendal **2** 68, Leitch **2** 88, Little **2** 24,71, Mackay **2** 25,26, MacKenzie **2** 26, Major **2** 46, Mitchell **1** 71, Montgomery **1** 12, Moore **1** 72, Read **1** 28, Rivkin **2** 50, Sharp **1** 74, Sivers **2** 54, Stren **2** 29, Takashima **2** 75, Williams **2** 59
Teenagers: Carruthers **1** 6, Craig **2** 65, Davies **2** 96, Haig-Brown **1** 79, Hunt **2** 43, Ireland **2** 43, James **2** 44, McCarthy **2** 27, Marquis **1** 24, Montgomery **1** 72, Rivkin **2** 51, St. Pierre **1** 83, Sloan **2** 74, Tardif **2** 75, Weir **2** 12, 58,59, Wood **1** 45

H

Handicaps
Brown **2** 37, Little **2** 24,71, Piper **2** 10, Powell **2** 49, Sivers **2** 54, Weir **2** 12

Health Care
Goresht **2** 20, Thurman **2** 29

Hockey as a Career *see also* Sports
McFarlane **1** 42, Young **1** 15,63

Humour
Abell **2** 13, Allan **2** 63, Klein **1** 11, Korman **2** 7,44, Lee **1** 23,24,57, McKim and McKim **2** 8, McNamee **1** 81, Mowat **1** 72, Straiton **2** 55, Stren **2** 55, Young **1** 15

I

Indian/Inuit/Métis/White Interrelationships
Andersen **2** 64, Craig **1** 36, Davidson **1** 8, Harris **1** 80, Hayes **1** 56, Houston **1** 9, **2** 67, Hunt **2** 43, King **1** 57, Leeder **2** 70, MacKenzie **1** 42, Mowat **1** 25, St. Pierre **1** 83, Truss **1** 62, Weir **2** 58

Indians *see also* Folklore, Indian
Andersen **1** 65, Aubry **1** 31, Blades **1** 48, Buchan **1** 50, Corriveau **1** 35, Cowell **1** 36, Craig **1** 36, Craven **1** 37, Faulknor **1** 38,53, Freeman **1** 19, Grey Owl **1** 55, Haig-Brown **1** 20, Harris **1** 80, Hiebert **1** 56, Houston **1** 22,70, Leitch **1** 58, MacKenzie **1** 42, Pfeifer **1** 59, Sharp **1** 74, Wood **1** 29,63

Inuit *see also* Folklore, Inuit
French **2** 66, Houston **1** 23,40,41, Markoosie **1** 59, Pitseolak **2** 91, Rokeby-Thomas **2** 57, Wilkinson **2** 77

Lifestyle *see* City Life, Pioneer and Frontier Life, Small Community Life (farm, fishing village, Indian village), Small Town Life, Wilderness or Isolated Life

Lumbering
Freeman **1** 54, German **1** 55, **2** 84, Kurelek **2** 97, McLaughlin **1** 43

M

Maple Sugar
McGill **1** 79

Medical Careers
Cooper 1 68, Feather 1 54

Metis
Carruthers 1 6, Cutt 1 37,77, Truss 1 62

Missionaries
Swayze 1 61, Young 1 75

Multiculturalism
Andersen 2 64, Blades 1 48, Cook 1 7,67, Cooper 1 52, Cormack 1 68, Duncan 1 8, Dunham 1 53, Hayes 1 69, Little 2 24,71, Paperny 1 27, Pasternak and Sutterfield 2 49, Singer 2 54, Smucker 1 13, Takashima 2 75, Wallace and Wood 2 76

Music
Allen 2 14, Layton 2 45, Tardif 2 75, Zander 2 60

Mystery and Suspense
Ashlee 2 93, Barnes 1 5,17,31,32,65, Barton 1 49, Bice 1 49, Clark 1 6, 2 39, Clemson 1 66, Collins 1 67, Cosgrove 1 19, Cowan 1 52, 2 5, Crooker 2 82, Davidson 1 8, Gould 2 6, Greene 1 20, Hunt 2 28, Lunn 1 24, McFarlane 1 70, Rivkin 2 50, Seager 2 28, Sherwood 2 53, Swayze 1 74, Walker 1 62, Wilson 1 14, 2 32, Woodward 1 45

N

Native Peoples *see* Indians, Inuit or Métis

Natural Science and Ecology
Charles 2 17, Reddick 1 82, Rising 2 50, Rowe 2 11, Schaffer 2 52

P

Picture Books *see also* Art Books
Blades 1 17, Charles 2 17, Cowell 1 36, DeVries 2 40, Hildes 2 21, Hopkins 2 21, MacDonald 2 89, Reese 2 10, Rising 2 50, Rowe 2 11, Schaffer 2 52, Thurman 2 29, Zander 2 60

Pioneer and Frontier Life
Acland 2 33, Andersen 2 64, Brill 1 33, Buchan 1 50, Connors 1 18, Cook 1 67, Cormack 1 68, Cutt 1 37,77, Downie 1 68, Eckert 1 53, Fowke 1 78, German 1 55, 2 84, Greene 1 20, Guttormson 1 39, Harris 2 84, Hayes 1 21,55,69,70, Hiemstra 2 94, King 1 52, Kouhi 1 57, Leeder 2 98, Reaney 1 28, Reekie 1 29

Poetry
Brand 2 95, Desbarats 2 83, Downie and Robertson 1 38, Lee 1 23,24,57, Moore 2 9, Newman and Boulanger 1 44, Obed 2 48, Pittman 1 28, Straiton 2 55

Prospecting and Mining
Clark 1 51, Clemson 1 66, Collins 1 67, Cosgrove 1 19, Houston 1 6, Siamon 2 12

Puppetry
Paperny 1 27

Puzzles and Riddles
McKim and McKim 2 8, McKim 2 27

R

RCMP
Hayes 1 9, Hughes 1 10, Leeder 2 70, McFarlane 1 70, Pfeifer 1 59

Rebellion of 1837
Cook 1 67, Hayes 1 39, Reaney 1 28, Turner 1 62

Red River Settlement
Guttormsson 1 39, Hayes 1 55

Riel Rebellion
Cutt 1 37, Hayes 1 56, McNamee 1 81, Reekie 2 73, Truss 1 62

Rock Music
Tardif 2 75

S

Sasquatch
Ashlee 2 93, Rolfe 1 28

Science Fiction
Harris 2 86, Hughes 2 6,22, Trim 2 58

Sea Stories
Barnhouse 2 80, Benham 2 81, Freeman 1 39, Hagielund 1 69, Haig-Brown 1 20, McLaughlin 2 27, Mowat 1 25

Slavery
Andersen 1 65, Clark 1 6, Smucker 1 13

Small Community Life
Blades 1 48, Carlson 1 34,50, Cook 1 19,34,52, Connor 1 18, Craig 1 36, Daveluy 1 78, Dunham 1 53, Faulknor 1 38,53, Feather 1 54, Hemon 1 80, Houston 1 70, Kurelek 2 69,88, Leitch 1

58, Major **2** 46, Marquis **1** 24, McCarthy **2** 27, McGill **1** 59,71, Mitchell **1** 81, Montgomery **1** 12, Moore **1** 72, Mowat **1** 12, Perkins **1** 73, Rokeby-Thomas **2** 51, Sauer **1** 60, St. Pierre **1** 83, Truss **1** 62, Walker **1** 14

Small Town Life
Callaghan **1** 66, Cook **1** 7,35,51,67, Childerhose **1** 18, Downie **1** 37, Laurence **2** 23, Little **2** 24, McFarlane **1** 58, Mitchell **1** 71, Montgomery **1** 72, Mowat **1** 72, St. John **1** 60

Smuggling
Bice **1** 49, Mowat **1** 25

Sports
Craig (Cross country running) **2** 39, Leitch (Riding) **2** 88, Powell (Cave exploring) **2** 49, Walters (Basketball) **2** 31, Weir (Jousting) **2** 58, (Riding) **2** 59
Figure Skating: Cook **1** 7, Duncan **1** 8
Hockey: Brain **2** 36, Childerhose **1** 18, Kellerhals-Stewart **1** 56, Klein **1** 11, Knapp **2** 22, Walters **2** 31, Young, C. **1** 15, Young, S. **1** 30,63

Survival
Eckert **1** 53, Houston **1** 9,40,41, **2** 67, Hyde **1** 10, Mowat **1** 25,26, Wilkinson **2** 77, Wood **1** 45,63

T

Teaching
Hanna **2** 41

Trade Unionism
Freeman **1** 54

Trapping
Haig-Brown **1** 79, Wood **1** 45

Travel – Canada
Doyle **2** 19, Holling **1** 22, Mowat **1** 25, Wilson **1** 14, Woodward **1** 45

U

Underground Railroad
Smucker **1** 13

United Empire Loyalists
Acland **2** 33, Downie and Downie **1** 68, Fryer **1** 20, Hayes **1** 70

V

Voyageurs
Acland **1** 47, Cook and Davies **1** 77, Corriveau **1** 35, Herapath **1** 80, Phelan **1** 82

W

War of 1812
Ballantyne **1** 48, Hayes **1** 21

Wilderness or Isolated Life
Carruthers **1** 6, Corriveau **1** 35, Haig-Brown **1** 79, MacKenzie **2** 26, Wood **1** 79

World War II
Burnford **2** 81, Little **2** 71, Mitchell **1** 81, Takashima **2** 75

Writing
Little **2** 24, Wood **1** 45

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All in-print books should be available through your local bookseller. The store can order for you any title it does not have in stock.

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Sheila Egoff, The Republic of Childhood, Oxford, 1975, p.14.

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